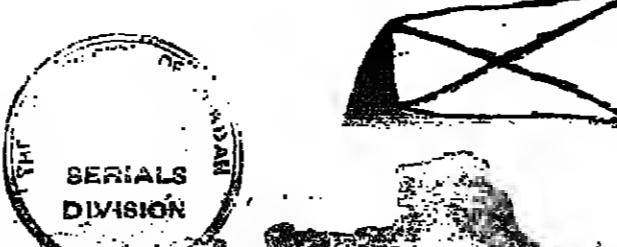


Syria pins hopes on Assad-Clinton talks

DAMASCUS (R) — Syria said Monday it hoped a meeting between President Hafez Al Assad and U.S. President Bill Clinton in Geneva later this month would reinforce U.N. resolutions calling for Israel to withdraw from Arab lands. Information Minister Mohammad Salman said the meeting was part of Syrian and U.S. efforts to achieve comprehensive peace in the Middle East. Mr. Assad and Mr. Clinton are due to meet in Geneva in mid-January to try to push forward the Syrian-Israeli peace talks, deadlocked over the issue of the Golan Heights. "We hope this important summit will lead to effective results to implement the international legitimacy (U.N.) resolutions," Mr. Salman said. The heads of the Syrian and Lebanese negotiating teams left for Washington on Monday to pave the way for a new round of talks, officials and diplomats said. Mouwafak Al Alif of Syria and Shuaib Shammash of Lebanon will consult U.S. officials on the next moves in the peace process, which also involves Jordan and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).



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'Fast pace of events warrants urgent Jordan-PLO coordination'

Anani explains King's call on Arafat, says Jordan seeks transparency, clarity in dealings

By Nermeen Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

DAMASCUS (AFP) — A split in Palestinian leader Nayef Hawatmeh, opposed to the phantom economy accord, called on the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat Monday to renounce the cross deal. The leader of the world Damascus-based Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) said Mr. Arafat should cancel the self-rule deal and join other Palestinian factions and Arab states bordering Israel in their search for "global and balanced peace" in the Middle East. Mr. Hawatmeh said Mr. Arafat was on bad terms with the majority of Palestinians and the accord be signed with Vice Israel was "doomed to failure." Mr. Arafat had made PLO relations with Jordan deteriorate and "destroyed coordination with Syria and Lebanon" in the framework of the Arab-Israeli peace process. Mr. Hawatmeh added.

U.S. says deal with North Korea near

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States and North Korea are near to a deal on Pyongyang's nuclear programme that could be wrapped up this week, a senior U.S. official said Monday. The official told reporters there are some issues that the International Atomic Energy Agency must address and this was being done "soon, quickly," but probably no further meetings between U.S. and North Korea negotiators were needed. While he held out the possibility that discussions could extend a bit longer, the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, went further than U.S. officials have previously in raising expectations that a deal with Pyongyang was close at hand.

U.S. planned Saddam killing before war

NEW YORK (R) — The United States developed a secret plan to assassinate Iraqi President Saddam Hussein before it launched the attack that drove Iraq out of Kuwait in 1991, Newsweek magazine has reported. The plan is detailed in excerpts from a new book, "The Commandos: The Inside Story of America's Secret Soldiers," written by the magazine's defence correspondent, Douglas Waller. The book said the plan called for an attack on President Saddam either by the army's Delta force or the navy's SEAL team 6 and was planned by the Joint Chiefs of Staff's special operations division. The attack was to be taken place as President Saddam travelled in and out of Kuwait by helicopter or motor boat after his army overran the country in August 1990.

Ghali names Kittani special adviser

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — Iraq's diplomat Ismat Kittani was named a special adviser to U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali, spokesman for the U.N. chief said Monday. Dr. Kittani, 64, who was the special envoy to Somalia and Tajikistan, will have the title of special adviser to the secretary general at the under-secretary general level. He will follow Asian affairs and the former Soviet Union, as well as the U.N. General Assembly, said Ahmad Fawzi, a spokesman for the secretary general.

Carey meets Sudan rebel leaders

NAIROBI (AFP) — The archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, met here Monday with the leaders of the rival rebel movements in southern Sudan following his controversial four-day trip to that region. The archbishop said he had appealed to John Garang and Riek Machar "to seek peace amongst themselves for the sake of the survival of the people and of peace in Sudan. The search for peace in Sudan is hindered by the continuing tragic division in the SPLA (Sudan People's Liberation Army). These splits distress the people of the south and complicate negotiations with the Khartoum government.

ments."

— Set the modus operandi for cooperation during the transitional period.

— Open a future dialogue between Jordan and the PLO when the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations on final status begin.

— Talk frankly about what both parties expect from each other.

— Ask where the PLO stands on existing agreements between Jordan and the PLO.

— Ensure that there will be a continuous not sporadic process of coordination.

With Israel possibly reaching separate agreements with Arab parties to the peace negotiations, Dr. Anani said, the Kingdom was worried that Jordan would appear "weak and indecisive" as it continues to place Palestinian interests ahead of its own progress towards peace.

Dr. Anani told a group of journalists that his reading of His Majesty's address to the senior officers, in which he cautioned PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat that if coordination did not start this week it could be the last chance before Jordan and PLO find themselves taking different courses, was borne out of concern that the "tempo of events is very high and moving at an alarming speed."

The King, Dr. Anani said, was also wanted to respond once and for all to Israeli-initiated claims that the Kingdom harboured political ambitions over the West Bank and Gaza Strip despite its return of its policy of supporting the independent Palestinian decision in its negotiations with Israel.

When the Palestinian coordination committee arrives here today or tomorrow, Dr. Anani said, its Jordanian counterpart is going to insist on at least five main principles that would guide coordination between the two sides parallel to their separate negotiations with Israel: These are:

— That the PLO deal with Jordan with transparency and clarity. "We want to be informed in time and have an exchange of docu-



Jawad Anani

cause of the deadlines which have been reached by the signing of the declaration of principles (DoP) between Israel and the PLO setting specific dates for the transitional stage and the final status negotiations.

One would ask why say it and why now, and the answer is because we don't have time — we are running out of time," Dr. Anani said.

The King's message to the PLO is, Dr. Anani said, "you should coordinate with Jordan and we better coordinate now."

He added that the King's message to the PLO was not to signal impending "divorce" but one that tried to impress on the Palestinian decision-makers that "late coordination might be more futile than no coordination."

The lack of coordination over the past two years between the PLO and Jordan, according to Dr. Anani, has contributed to the existence of what is termed as "ill will" between the two sides.

The King, in this week's address, strove to dispel some of the feeling of distrust that exists in Jordanian

Palestinian relations. According to Dr. Anani, the King's reference to Jordan's commitment to Jerusalem's holy places and the concept of confederation were aimed at dispelling the feeling that Jordan still had designs to rule the West Bank.

On the issue of Jerusalem, Dr. Anani said, Jordan had repeatedly explained that its insistence on safeguarding the holy places was not aimed at establishing "geographic jurisdiction but a religious one." He explained that Jordan believes that since the issue of Jerusalem was left to final status negotiations relinquishing jurisdiction over Jerusalem's holy places may play into Israel's hand by creating a "sovereignty vacuum" during the interim period of Palestinian self-rule.

"Our move was continuously misrepresented as an attempt to overreach into the West Bank, which is untrue," Dr. Anani said.

The second issue of contention, Dr. Anani said, was the concept of a confederation between Jordan and the emerging Palestinian entity. "The King demanded that this debate be dropped completely to eliminate any suspicion that Jordan wanted to take over the PLO's role for Palestinians."

He said that the King wanted the postponement of the idea of confederation until such a time when Palestinians have achieved the right to self-determination. "It is too early to discuss when Palestinians still have no right to self-determination and could be interpreted to mean that Jordan was trying to intervene in Palestinian affairs."

The third cause of mistrust, which Dr. Anani said the King did not mention in his speech, was Jordan's intention to reopen Jordanian bank branches in the occupied territories.

"It saddens us that the framework of cooperation between us and the Palestinians has been spearheaded by the issue of banking," Dr. Anani said. "It appears

(Continued on page 5)

Israel and PLO spar in public and deal in private

Combined agency dispatches

ISRAEL AND the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) sparred at each other in public Monday but behind the scenes their peacemakers nudged the obstacles to starting Palestinian self-rule.

The two sides had planned to resume talks early this week hoping to settle differences holding up the start of an Israeli troop withdrawal from the occupied Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho.

Behind the scenes, officials said the two sides faxed and phoned each other and enlisted the help of other countries.

But in public they argued over whether their talks last week in Cairo, aimed at loosening the logjam, had ended in agreement. Israel said yes the PLO said no.

In Paris, talks between Israeli and PLO economic specialists resumed in Paris on Monday despite the impasse over political and security affairs.

The Paris talks, which last convened in mid-December, are to lay the groundwork for economic cooperation between Israel and areas of the West Bank and Gaza from which Israel was scheduled to start withdrawing on Dec. 13.

An Israeli spokesman said the Paris talks held at the French government's Kleber conference centre, "would continue as long as is necessary."

The economic specialists are meeting in sub-committees devoted to such subjects as finance, banking and trade between Israel and the areas due to be evacuated.

In Tunis, PLO leaders Monday rejected conditions set by Israel for the resumption of the talks on implementing their

agreement on Palestinian self-rule.

"We reject the Israeli dictat and we wait for Israel's response to our amendments to its proposals," PLO Executive Committee member Suleiman Najab said.

"They (the Israelis) are responsible for the halt in negotiations," he told Reuters after a PLO Executive Committee meeting chaired by Yasser Arafat.

The two sides had hoped to meet in Taba, Egypt, on Monday or Tuesday.

Under the September Peace accord, Israel was to have started its withdrawal on Dec. 13.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said on Sunday talks on how to implement the accord could resume only when the PLO agreed the basis was a document he said they had agreed on in Cairo last week.

"We will let them sweat," he is reported as telling the Israeli cabinet.

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Israelis kill 3 teenagers in Gaza

GAZA CITY, occupied Gaza Strip (Agencies) — Israeli troops Monday shot and killed three Palestinian teenagers in the occupied Gaza Strip, Arab sources said.

Troops fatally shot Fadel Ibrahim Ribani, 19, in the mouth after he threw stones at an army jeep patrolling the Jabalya refugee camp, while elite troops shot Abas Khader Al Saidi, 18, in the Shati camp, they said.

Taxi driver Ibrahim Abu Dan told AFP that he saw soldiers, who were looking for Palestinians who had fled in a Peugeot 404 car, first wounding Saidi and then finishing him off with a second shot.

Farid Chaarawi, 19, was killed by a bullet which penetrated his abdomen when Israeli soldiers opened fire in the Shati camp at demonstrators showering them with stones.

Tension was clearly mounting in Gaza Monday night despite a curfew which takes effect every evening as of 8:00 p.m. (1800 GMT), the same sources said.

These deaths bring to 1,163 the number of Palestinians killed by Israeli bullets in the occupied territories since uprising erupted six years ago, according to an AFP toll.

Also on Monday, Palestinian sources here said Israeli troops have arrested two members of PLO chief Yasser Arafat's Fatah faction who are suspected of killing two Israelis last week (see page 10).

TUNIS (Agencies) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat came under new pressure Monday to stop monopolising key decisions on the peace talks with Israel and to make the organisation more democratic.

Nabil Amr, a member of the team, said the PLO chairman "displayed a high readiness to listen and argue, but made no promises" during the meeting Sunday night.

Interviewed Monday by the Associated Press, Mr. Amr said the seven-man delegation proposed a "mechanism" for political reforms to allow wider participation in the decision-making process for Palestinians inside and outside the occupied territories.

But he refused to elaborate on the proposal, and said more meetings will be held in the next two days with Mr. Arafat and top members of the PLO's ruling Executive Committee.

The delegation was led by Haidar Abdul Shafii, a Gaza physician who headed Palestinian negotiator to the Arab-Israeli peace process when it was launched in Madrid in October 1991. It included members of the negotiating team.

Speaking to reporters on arrival in Tunis Sunday, Dr. Abdul Shafii said: "Our main

demands is to expand the decision-making authority so that decisions are no longer made by Arafat alone. We basically want to set up a collective Palestinian leadership."

Mr. Arafat, who became chairman of the PLO in 1968, has been under increasing attack from critics who say he should change his autocratic rule and allow more democracy in the movement.

The reformists support the Sept. 13 PLO-Israeli accord for limited Palestinian self-rule. But they disagree with the way Mr. Arafat is handling negotiations with Israel for its implementation.

The agreement has been stalled by differences between the PLO and Israel over control of crossings between Jordan and Jericho and Egypt and Gaza and the physical area of the West Bank town of Jericho.

The reformists had sent a four-page memo to Mr. Arafat last month. It accused the PLO of "not doing enough to foster dialogue among the various Palestinian factions to address the opposition to the autonomy accord" and of "failing to present the accord in an objective, clear manner so that the people would know its implications..."

The memo called for special committees, including Palesti-

nians in the occupied territories and in the diaspora, to deal with the autonomy negotiations with Israel rather than leaving PLO-appointed delegates to do the job.

"We want to broaden the decision-making structure so that it does not stay entirely in Abu Ammar's (Arafat's) hands," Dr. Abdul Shafii said Sunday, adding he would call for a "collective leadership."

At least six of the 12 PLO Executive Committee members support the demands according to a Palestinian official.

Dr. Abdul Shafii, a founding PLO member, who has for months demanded more democracy, said: "Committee appointments should not be made only on the basis of political and personal considerations."

He stressed the need to use Palestinians of ability at this "decisive" time.

Three leading figures in the Palestinian uprising against the Israeli occupation resigned Dec. 26 in protest at Mr. Arafat's decision to name a 13-member council to head Fatah operations in the Gaza Strip.

Mr. Arafat said the resignations had stemmed from a misunderstanding and promised "serious changes will be carried out" in the Fatah leadership in Gaza.

Majali stresses decentralisation

MAFRAO (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali Monday underlined the importance of decentralisation for every governorate in the Kingdom so that every executive council in the respective governorates can shoulder its responsibility towards its citizens and their needs. Addressing the executive council of Mafraq Governorate, Dr. Majali said that the success of the idea of decentralisation save people the effort of going to the capital and the ministries and official departments will have enough time for mapping out plans and controlling policies. Dr. Majali referred to the huge burdens Jordan has been shouldering in light of its nationalist positions, indicating that the efficiency of the country's organs is a major reason for stability that is why they must be updated. The prime minister was accompanied by Dr. Sa'id Al Tal, deputy prime minister and minister of higher education.



His Majesty King Hussein Monday receives Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa in a meeting attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan (Petra photo)

Jordan, Egypt to revitalise joint higher committee

Musa delivers Mubarak message to King, stresses need for Arab coordination

Egyptian minister backs PLO on Cairo paper

by P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa paid a brief visit to Amman Monday to deliver a message from President Hosni Mubarak to His Majesty King Hussein and discuss the Middle East peace process and bilateral relations.

He added that the King made Saturday calling on the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) to undertake immediate moves towards coordination with Jordan.

Both Mr. Musa and his Jordanian counterpart Talal Al Hassan also announced plans to revitalise the work of the joint Jordanian-Egyptian Higher Committee headed at prime ministers' level. The committee has not met since 1990, when conflicting positions of Jordan and Egypt over the Gulf crisis caused a strain in relations.

Reports from Cairo said Mr. Musa's visit was to Amman to discuss with Jordanian-Egyptian relations and overall Arab relations than the strict politics of the peace process.

Arab diplomats noted that Mr. Musa's visit to Amman followed two days of talks here by the Qatari foreign minister, Sheikh Hamad Ben Jassim Al

Thani, who said after the discussions that all differences between Doha and Amman were removed and that both sides were planning to launch economic and political cooperation.

They said Egypt, which would like

Three months after historic deal, Arafat finds little to show

By Jack Redden

AMMAN — Yasser Arafat has entered the New Year facing a bleak political landscape, with pressure mounting from all sides in the Middle East and even Palestinian support for his leadership draining away.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) chairman made the biggest news of 1993 when his handshake with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin sealed a peace accord in September.

But his failure to translate it into reality leaves his future looking increasingly precarious.

Haider Abdul Shafi, chief Palestinian negotiator in the Washington talks with Israel, left Amman for Tunis Sunday to demand Mr. Arafat share power inside the PLO.

"We are not happy with the way negotiations are going," said Dr. Abdul Shafi, who has always harboured deep doubts about Mr. Arafat's September accord. "There isn't a coherent plan."

Hours earlier, King Hussein warned Mr. Arafat to conclude an agreement with Jordan on future political and economic links.

That warning followed last week's failure of talks with Israel in Cairo on implementing September's self-rule accord that marked the greatest gamble of Mr. Arafat's career.

If he had thought Israel would reward him for the accord, he was seriously miscalculated. So far he has had little to show to an increasingly sceptical Palestinian public.

Only a handful of the more than 10,000 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails have been freed. Jewish settlement of Arab land continues unabated.

Most damaging to expectations Mr. Arafat had helped inflate, the promised Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho did not begin on Dec. 13 as prescribed in the accord.

While the PLO appears to flounder, Israel has enjoyed a diplomatic bonanza since the September accord.

As Israeli-PLO talks failed in Cairo, the Vatican formally recognised Israel — long a goal of Israeli foreign policy.

Tunisia, Qatar and Oman are hosting meetings on Middle East issues that will in-

clude Israeli delegates — proof of the acceptance gained by Israel through the peace talks.

"Why do some Arabs feel embarrassed from meeting Israelis in Arab countries but they don't object to such meeting in Western states?" Qatar's foreign minister said in Amman on Sunday.

In contrast to Israel's improving ties in the Arab World, the PLO is discovering it is hard to find a friend — at least one willing to prove its sympathy with money.

PLO officials complained last week that Egypt, second on the U.S. foreign aid list only to Israel, was pressing for Mr. Arafat to accept Israeli terms for implementing the accord.

Faisal Husseini, Mr. Arafat's deputy in the occupied territories, received the same advice to make concessions during a future fund-raising mission to Saudi Arabia last month, PLO sources reported.

ANALYSIS

Mr. Arafat has often survived by shifting and blurring to keep the fault lines of the Palestinian movement obscured. His options this time are grim. It's a no-win predicament.

Israel shows no urgency to secure Mr. Arafat's agreement to the self-rule terms with Mr. Rabin saying on Sunday his position is fixed and he will let the PLO "sweat."

If Mr. Arafat accepts terms he said were a humiliation, his dwindling prestige will take another dip — and Palestinians who condemned the accord from the start as a surrender will find fresh ammunition.

The agreement contained the seeds of its own failure.

Dr. Abdul Shafi said just before flying to a meeting with Mr. Arafat.

The septuagenarian physician from Gaza wondered if the PLO would resume its decades-old call for international intervention — more unlikely than ever in a world where the only superpower is an unreservedly pro-Israel United States.

Only months after hopes for peace soared, Dr. Abdul Shafi, one of the most respected of Palestinians, fears it was an illusion: "All that will boil down to is that there will be no peace."

If the contract value is greater than five million dinars (\$17

Companies chasing Kuwait work face offset challenge

KUWAIT (R) — The golden bonanza never came for foreign companies seeking to help rebuild Kuwait after the Gulf war.

Three years on, new offset trade obligations have added to the challenge facing contractors already hit by the emirate's post-war economic downturn.

Under the guidelines, firms signing contracts from one million to five million dinars must contribute to an offset development fund aimed at promoting private business.

"We want to get the message across that we're here to help companies make money," said a Finance Ministry official. "We know these companies are in the business of making profits."

But critics note even Kuwaitis see little promise in the moribund non-oil sectors of banking, hotels, the stock market and limited light industry. Private Kuwaiti investments continue to flow overseas.

Chamber of Commerce and Industry board member Abdul Wahhab Al Wazzan said Kuwaitis had obtained 2,000 commercial licences and invested in 25,000 properties in the United Arab Emirates since the war because of the poor business climate at home.

Diplomats add the government has been slow to point business towards good opportunities.

Officials reply that learning to use personal contact, Kuwaiti-style, is vital to discovering investment opportunities.

Private offset consultant Stefan Skrzyniak said offset could help contractors make additional profits but up-to-the minute knowledge of the Kuwait business scene was a key factor.

Hughes executive Robert O'Rourke said offset "certainly is a challenge."

Although foreigners are not allowed to buy into the state-owned oil firms they will be allowed to provide oil support services — one of the targets Hughes is aiming at.

Some nevertheless describe Kuwait offset as a trade barrier. They say it favours multinational companies able to absorb offset costs by using economies of scale and requires smaller exporters to divert precious management resources.

"It could also make firms increase their prices to cover the 30 per cent (required by offset)," one diplomat said. "If all alternative suppliers make the same calculation, the buyer will end up paying for the offset, whoever he chooses."

To meet the criticism that it is difficult to identify suitable investments, Kuwaitis say they will consider permitting joint ventures registered in Kuwait to operate offshore.

If the contract value is greater than five million dinars (\$17

Belgian police hold 50 in Turk-Kurdish clashes

BRUSSELS (Agencies) — More than 50 youths carrying knives, baseball bats and petrol bombs were arrested Sunday night when about 500 Turks protesting against the presence of Kurdish "freedom marchers" in Brussels clashed with police.

It was the second successive night of trouble in the narrow streets of the city's Turkish quarter. Eleven people were hurt Saturday night, when police used a water cannon to break up fighting between Kurdish and Turkish immigrants.

"One Molotov cocktail was thrown tonight. We intervened with riot police and they dispersed. Youths smashed the windows of Kurdish shops and we think they will come back," a police spokesman told Reuters at the scene of Sunday's clashes.

Police chief Jo de Cuyper said about 160 officers were on hand and they arrested at least 50 youths. "There were about 500 altogether at one time, but they split up into smaller groups."

The Turks had tried to prevent the 150-strong group of Kurds holding a meeting in a local hall and were angered when a Kurdish flag was draped over the balcony of the building.

The Kurds were then escorted to a sports hall in another part of Brussels, where they remained on Sunday.

"The choice of the area (to hold the meeting) was not, made on purpose," Timur Sayan, a member of the Union of Intellectual patriots of Kurdistan which organised the March, told Reuters at the sports hall.

Banners around the hall said, "Stop military aid to Turkey. End illegality of Kurdish Labour Party (PKK)."

"The Turks tried to discredit our march. We had no intention of posing problems to the Belgian people," Mr. Sayan added.

U.N. says Iraqis left Kuwaiti side of border

KUWAIT (R) — All the Iraqis who used to live in the Kuwaiti part of the border town of Umm Qasr have now moved to new houses on the Iraqi side, U.N. officials said Sunday.

"Since zero hour on the first of January, no more Iraqi citizens or their assets are in the residential areas of Umm Qasr on the Kuwaiti side of the border," United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission (UNIKOM) spokesman Abd Latif Kabbaj told Reuters by telephone.

"They were evacuated to the Iraqi side of the town where they were allocated new apartments (by the Iraqi authorities)."

Mr. Kabbaj said the move, which had been taking place since mid-November, was supervised by U.N. officials. The Kuwaiti authorities took over their side of Umm Qasr on Saturday.

"The Kuwaiti side of the town came under Kuwait's authority after it was inspected by the force commander of UNIKOM Major-General (Krishna) Thapa on Saturday," he said.

In 1993 a U.N. border demarcation commission, set up under Gulf war-related ceasefire resolutions, ruled that several farms, part of an oilfield and a part of Umm Qasr town were on the Kuwaiti side of the border.

"Kuwait can, if it wishes, resume digging the trench," said Mr. Kabbaj.

Iraqi forces seized Kuwait in August 1990. A multinational alliance led by the United States ejected them in February 1991.

For years Iraq and Kuwait had used a de facto border

slightly to the south of the De Jure border in places.

UNIKOM said the evacuation, which started in mid-November, was "smoothly carried out without any incident."

But more Iraqis have to be moved to Iraq from other Kuwaiti areas.

"Iraqi farmers are still present in the Al Abdali farms. Baghdad did not yet give a date for the beginning of the farmers' evacuation," Mr. Kabbaj said.

A United Nations envoy visited Kuwait last September to evaluate the assets of 63 Iraqi farming families separated from their land by the newly demarcated frontier.

Kuwait says it will pay U.N.-assessed compensation to the Iraqi farmers who ended up on the wrong side of the border.

Mr. Kabbaj said Kuwait stopped the digging of a security border trench because of the presence of Iraqi people and assets in Kuwaiti territories through which the trench is to be dug.

In June 1993, the emirate started digging a border trench three metres deep and five metres wide along the 207 kilometre desert border to keep out infiltrators.

"Kuwait can, if it wishes, resume digging the trench," said Mr. Kabbaj.

Iraqi forces seized Kuwait in August 1990. A multinational alliance led by the United States ejected them in February 1991.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Settlers group rejects transfer

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Jews living in an isolated settlement in the Gaza Strip Sunday rejected a proposal for them to move to a more protected area within the occupied territory. Eli Dayan, head of the Labour Party bloc in parliament, told thirty families from the Netzarim settlement that a "whole army battalion would be needed to protect them" and suggested they join Jewish settlers in Gush Katif. The Israeli news agency Itam said the settlers rejected Mr. Dayan's proposal and pledged to stay put. Meanwhile several thousand settlers in the Jordan Valley went on strike against the national news agency Belga, said the clashes on Saturday were started after provocation by "militant members of the PPK."

Mr. Dayan said the aim of the march was to "denounce the Turkish government's policy of genocide towards the Kurds" and to "sensitise public awareness on the issue and in favour of a democratic solution."

Germany banned the PPK and affiliated groups in November, saying they used violence to achieve their aims and were a domestic threat.

The PPK has been fighting since 1984 for an independent Kurdish homeland in southeast Turkey. Since then more than 10,000 people have been killed in the guerrilla war.

Mr. Dayan said a hunger strike started by the protesters in Saturday would probably end shortly.

He added that members of the group hoped to meet Belgian Foreign Minister Willy Claes on Monday and Interior Minister Louis Tobback on Tuesday. The group would then disperse.

"Brussels is the centre of

Europe — we want Europe to stop selling arms to Turkey and we want it to bring influence on Turkey to help solve the Kurdish question," Mr. Dayan said.

Attacks in Diyarbakir

Kurdish separatists threw

grenades and opened fire on

the mayor's house, two news

paper offices and a nightclub in

the southeastern Turkish city of Diyarbakir, two days after a visit by the premier and cabinet.

U.S. considers parole of Pollard

NEW YORK (R) — The Clinton administration is considering the possibility of parole for Israeli spy Jonathan Pollard but is unlikely to follow through, Time magazine reported Sunday. The magazine said in a brief article which did not specify its sources that Deputy Attorney General Philip Heyman is drafting a list of compromise options for Mr. Pollard, whom Israel wants freed. The list reportedly includes the possibility of a reduced sentence that would make him eligible for parole in a few months. The magazine added, however, that the list may only be a ploy that would allow Mr. Clinton to reassure Israel he considered all options in the case. Mr. Pollard, a former navy intelligence analyst, has pleaded guilty to spying for Israel. A federal judge gave him the maximum possible sentence of life in prison. Mr. Pollard, in jail since his arrest outside the Israeli embassy in 1985, has filed a request with the U.S. Pardon Office, part of the Justice Department, to have his sentence shortened to the amount of time already served. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin urged Mr. Clinton at a White House meeting in November to pardon Mr. Pollard.

Saudi prince in Morocco on private visit

RABAT (AFP) — Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Abdullah Ben Abdul Aziz arrived in Casablanca Sunday evening for a private visit during which he is due to meet Morocco's King Hassan II. Prince Abdullah, who is also deputy prime minister and commander of the National Guard, was welcomed by a number of officials, including Driss Slaoui, an advisor to the Moroccan monarch. The private visit is scheduled to last a few days. Prince Abdullaziz makes regular trips to Morocco, where the Saudi royal family owns a number of residences.

European tourists drown off Algerian coast

ALGIERS (AFP) — The bodies of three drowned holidaymakers, including two Spanish men, have been washed up by the sea in the Oran region of western Algeria, consular officials said Monday. It had not yet been possible to identify one of the corpses, which were found on the shore last Thursday, but it was believed also to be that of a European. The officials said the three men had been on board the yacht Pajama II, which last docked at the Portuguese harbour of Porto Figueira da Foz on Dec. 20. The boat left its home port in the Galicia region of Spain on Dec. 15, for an undisclosed destination.

Cyprus drowns after saving holidaymaker

NICOSIA (AFP) — A Cypriot rescued an elderly British holidaymaker from the sea off this Mediterranean island but drowned himself as his family watched in horror. The Cyprus News Agency reported Monday. It said Neophytos Antoniou, a 34-year-old civil aviation worker, died Sunday in the southeast tourist resort of Ayia Napa after he was swept out by huge waves and probably struck the rocks. William Charles Eric Roberts was saved with the help of a rope and jumped to safety. Mr. Antoniou's wife and two small children, on the beach for a stroll to enjoy the winter sunshine, watched helplessly as he was swept out after a half-hour operation to save Mr. Roberts.

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

Dep. Amsterdam 0845 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Amsterdam 0845 a.m. every Monday
Dep. Paris 0845 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Paris 0845 a.m. every Sunday
Dep. Brussels (KU) 0845 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Brussels (KU) 0845 a.m. every Sunday

HUJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman Kuta m. every Monday
Arr. Amman 0845 a.m. every Monday
Dep. Damaskus 0845 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damaskus 0845 a.m. every Monday

MARKET PRICES

Upper layer price in lib. per kg.
Apples 700/400
Bananas 600/300
Banana (Nokamari) 600/300
Beans 400/200
Carrots 80/40
Cauliflower 240/160
Cucumbers 180/100
Lettuce 260/200
Lemons 150/100
Onions 150/100
Paprika 200/100
Potatoes 100/50
Pumpkin 150/100
Marrow (large) 100/70
Marrow (small) 200/120
Onions (large) 200/120
Onions (small) 200/120
Cucumbers (large) 150/100
Cucumbers (small) 200/120
Eggs 200/100
Garlic 100/50
Grape Fruits 100/50
Lemons 150/100
Marrow (large) 100/70
Marrow (small) 200/120
Onions (large) 200/120
Onions (small) 200/120
Cucumbers (large) 150/100
Cucumbers (small) 200/120
Paprika 200/100
Potatoes 100/50
Pumpkin 150/100
Rhubarb 200/100
Tomato 200/100
Spinach 200/120

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

Leftist parties criticise budget

By Suhaib Obeidat
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Six leftist political parties Monday criticised the JD 1,487 billion draft budget for 1994 and called on the Lower House of Parliament to reject it.

A joint statement issued by the six said the draft budget, which is under study by the Finance Committee of the House, placed the greater burden of economic reform on the poor, and thus deepened the gap between the rich and poor.

The statement, a copy of which was made available to the Jordanian Times, was signed by the Jordanian Communist Party, the Communist Arab Baath Party, the Jordanian Popular Unity Party, the Jordanian Democratic People's Party (Hashd), the Jordanian Socialist Democratic Party and the Jordanian Democratic Arab Party.

It called on the House to reject the draft budget, presented to parliament in mid-December by Finance Minister Sami Gammoh, and "defend the people's right to their daily bread."

Listing its own version of the objectives of the country's economic policy, the statement said that economic development in the past two years did not justify the increase in local revenues (mainly from indirect taxes and fees).

The statement asserted that the expected introduction of a sales tax would "increase the production costs of the local industries and lead to a general price increase in market, and raise the poverty line..."

Other byproducts of the sales tax, according to the statement, will be a decline in demand for local products and investment and an increase in unemployment.

The statement called for a link between prices and wages and a minimum level of wages in accordance with all related studies of living costs and the poverty line."

It claimed that the increase in the income and profit taxes came mainly from shareholding companies and employees, "which indicates that the percentage of tax invasion is still very high."

On expenditure, the statement claims that there is no serious attempt to reduce the deficit by decreasing expenditure, "rather it is about increasing revenues while maintaining the level of expenditure."

The statement said that the budget is not "deficit-free" as described by Mr. Gammoh, but that there is a deficit of JD 450 million "to be covered by local and foreign aid and loans."

The statement concluded by some suggestions to "treat the economic situation and the budget, including an increase in the salaries of active and retired civil servants and the military."

In his daily column which appeared in the Arabic daily "Al Ra'i" Monday, economist Fahd Al Fanek accused those advocating an increase in salaries as being "irresponsible."

He said that there is no guarantee that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) will reschedule Jordan's debts "regardless of our adherence to the economic reform programme, which includes decreasing the budget deficit."

RJ, Gulf Air sign maintenance agreement

AMMAN (J.T.) — Gulf Air has joined other Arab and foreign airlines in acquiring maintenance of its engines at the Royal Jordanian (RJ) technical workshop at the Queen Alia International Airport in Amman.

Gulf Air, owned by Arab Gulf countries, RJ Monday signed a deal for the maintenance of two engines used by the Gulf Air Boeing 737 aircraft. By workshop has been providing such service to various aircraft owned by Arab and foreign airlines.

The deal was signed by RJ Vice President Zeid Kilani and Gulf Air Deputy Director Ahmad Abdul Ghani.



His Majesty King Hussein received at the Royal Court Monday Mr. Jonathan Atkin, British minister of state for defence affairs. They exchanged views about regional and international affairs. Later (below) the King received Amin Al Hafez, former Lebanese prime minister who is on a current visit to Jordan.



NEWS IN BRIEF

Crown Prince visits army unit

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Monday visited the Third Jordanian Protection Regiment and was briefed on the training practices the members currently undergo. The Crown Prince was accompanied by the chief of staff of the Royal ground forces, the Inspector general, and the commander of the Third Royal Armoured Division. This unit is about to finish its training programme in preparation for Jordanian units currently serving in the U.N. peacekeeping force in the former Yugoslavia.

Prince Faisal visits youth ministry

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Faisal Ben Al Hussein Monday visited the youth ministry where he met with Youth Minister Abdullah Oweidat and several ministry officials. Prince Faisal and Dr. Oweidat discussed issues related to sports and youth movements in Jordan and means of developing them. The two also dwelt on car racing and gliding, with Prince Faisal expressing his keen interest in supporting these sports to enable Jordan to compete with other countries at the international level.

Masri meets Kuwaiti envoy

AMMAN (Petra) — Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Taher Al Masri Monday received the Kuwaiti charge d'affaires in Amman. Mr. Masri and the Kuwaiti envoy discussed Jordanian-Kuwaiti relations and issues of common interest.

Supply minister meets Karak businessmen

KARAK (Petra) — Supply Minister Radhi Ibrahim Monday stressed the Ministry of Supply's keenness to improve the services it offers to citizens in the Karak governorate and to solve all supply-related issues facing merchants and animal breeders in the governorate. In a meeting with several animal breeders and the presidents of the Karak and Mazar chambers of commerce in the presence of Karak Governor Khalaf Al Mahasneb, Mr. Ibrahim said the ministry has agreed with a share holding company to establish a poultry slaughter house, refrigerated warehouses and fodder plants to Karak, Aqaba and Irbid at a total cost of JD 10 million. The minister said the ministry will establish a grains mill and warehouse in cooperation with local investors. He pointed that there was a study prepared by the cement, potash and phosphate companies in the southern parts of Jordan to establish a holding company which would launch several industrial ventures.

Land revenues increase

AMMAN (Petra) — The revenues of the Lands and Survey Department in December have totalled JD 4,868,842, reflecting an increase of 31 per cent over the department's revenues in November, according to department director general Ali Al Gharabe. Mr. Gharabe said the department's December revenues also witnessed an increase of four per cent compared to the same month in 1992. The total of the department's revenues in 1993 as a whole witnessed an increase of 11 per cent compared to 1992. Mr. Gharabe said. The 1993 revenues reached JD 59,023,163 while the 1992 revenues totalled JD 53,162,918, he said.

Kamal becomes Yarmouk president

AMMAN (Petra) — A Royal Decree was issued Monday approving the appointment of Marwan Kamal as president of Yarmouk University. Dr. Kamal commenced his work as university president Monday morning.

Labour committee reviews action plan

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Labour's planning committee Monday discussed the outcome of recent field visits paid by several of its department heads to the ministry's labour and employment offices in Irbid, Salt, Ramtha, Tafila, South Shouneh, Madaba, Sabab, Zarga, Jerash and Mafrak. In a meeting which was chaired by Labour Minister Khaled Eghzawi and attended by department directors, a discussion took place on means of developing the ministry's work mechanisms in light of these visits and recommendations issued by department directors.

Hlass named acting secretary general of Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities

AMMAN (J.T.) — Laurice Hlass, a senior official at the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, has been appointed acting secretary general of the ministry, pending the appointment of a permanent secretary, it was announced Sunday.

Ms. Hlass, who was named as Jordan's first woman ambassador in 1970, is a strong contender for the secretary general's position, which was left vacant by the retirement of Mr. Nasri Alatalah who had occupied it for several years.

The Council of Ministers is expected to act on the appointment soon, and if Ms. Hlass is chosen for the job, she will be the first woman secretary general of a ministry in the history of Jordan.

NAF needs more funds

AMMAN (Petra) — The National Aid Fund (NAF) has issued an appeal to the government to increase the amount earmarked for it this year to deal with the problem of abject poverty in Jordan.

According to 1994 budget figures, allocation to NAF amounts to JD 13 million but an additional JD 5 million are at least needed to meet the basic requirements of the very needy people, said Acting NAF Director Majid Majali.

Quoting figures included in several poverty studies, prepared by a special committee entrusted for this task by the prime ministry, 5.5 per cent of the country's population of nearly four million citizens now live under the abject poverty line, defined as living on an income of up to JD 69, said Mr. Majali Monday.

He noted that sectors living at or below the absolute poverty line, defined as those sectors who earn a monthly income of JD 119 and less, account for at least 21.1 per cent of the population.

Mr. Majali said the people living within the abject poverty bracket were estimated at 214,500 individuals noting that Jordanian families, on the average, were each composed of 7.2 members and that 30,203 family heads receive monthly aid.

According to Mr. Majali the government had fixed the ceiling of aid at JD 50 per family in 1992, up from JD 40 in previous years.

"We hope the government would allocate additional funds to enable the NAF to raise the monthly assistance to JD 60 this year" Mr. Majali said.

Referring to vocational training for heads of poor families to enable them to earn a living, Mr. Majali said NAF, which was established in 1987, has been providing loans amounting to JD 5,479,944 for vocational training purposes.

He said that 4,218 projects were set up by poor families with these loans until now.

Noting that 66 per cent of these projects were successful, Mr. Majali said that the beneficiaries were no longer in need of the NAF financial aid.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Art exhibition by Sudanese artist Abdul Qadir Al Bakht at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by artist Sadik Kwaish entitled "Talisma" at Baladna Art Gallery.
- ★ Art exhibition by Jordanian artist Suba Mas'ab at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by Iraqi artist Abdul Jabbar Salman on bedouin culture at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition on the 100th anniversary of the death of French novelist Guy de Maupassant at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of Iraqi books at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by a number of Jordanian artists entitled "The Sixth Exhibition — Samples From The Contemporary Jordanian Art '93" at the Spanish Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition "Prints and Drawings of Fakhr Al-Nasir Zeid" (1915-1991) until the 15th of January '94 at Darat al Funun of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation. Also showing the "Permanent" Exhibition. (Tel. 643251/2).

DRAMA

- ★ Drama for children entitled "The Question" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

POETRY RECITAL

- ★ Poetry recital by poets Dr. Abdul Rahman Mangi, Dr. Zakaria Dawoud, Adib Al Khayat, and Faisal Abdul Khalil at the Arab Club for Culture and Art in Dabiq at 6:30 p.m.

Ministry of Interior prepares for national conference on safety

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Interior announced Monday that it is preparing for a national conference to be held before the end of this month to deal with matters related to public safety for citizens as well private and public sector buildings and installations.

The ministry said in a statement that holding the conference, which comes in response to directives by His Royal Highness Crown Prince, would involve the participation of a number of ministries and private and public sector institutions.

Interior Minister Salameh

Hammad has already circulated invitations to the concerned parties to prepare and deliver working papers to the ministry before Jan. 15, noting that a date and a venue for the conference would be decided in the light of the replies.

The statement said that the conference would tackle a number of issues pertaining to public safety and protection, creating a national legislation for self-protection in various installations, the introduction of subjects related to fire and rescue work in school curricula, setting up courses at Jordanian universities related fighting off fires and outlining a

comprehensive media plan to promote awareness among the public about measures for safety.

It added that the discussions would cover the role of municipalities in attaining public safety and the question of meeting the requirements of public safety in industrial cities, control and inspection on pre-existing and safety measures taken in the buildings and factories, disposal of dangerous waste in addition to dealing with matters related to chemical industries.

Moreover, the role of private institutions in highlighting the concept of public safety

among workers, and the role of the civil defence department in coordinating rescue and relief operations in times of catastrophes will be covered.

According to the statement, the working papers will depict the role of the interior ministry in matters related to the role of provincial governors and other ministries in dealing with matters related to environmental pollution and in providing basic requirements to fight off pollution in general as well as advising the public on matters related to the use of pesticides in controlling imported food stuff at the seaport of Aqaba and Jordanian airports.

Princess Basma urges women to implement action plan

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Monday urged the Jordanian National Committee for Women (JNCW) to implement the committee's plan of action soon as possible.

The princess told the committee members at a meeting that the JNCW should closely cooperate with the various private and public institutions to achieve the aspired goals. The JNCW, whose strategy includes a special clause for the action plan for social action for women, was endorsed by the Council of Ministers last October.

The JNCW, which came into being in 1992, aims at establishing a constructive dialogue among intellectuals and other sectors concerned with issues of development on the one hand and emphasising the contribution of women in tackling the various issues facing the country, on the other.

After discussions of the plan, the JNCW issued a statement noting that a decision has been taken to set up a sub-committee to put the plan into force and to embark on the preliminary work for its implementation according to priorities.

The committee also decided to approach the government to give priority in appointment in government posts to women who bear the responsibility for their families.

The plan calls for efforts to be made by the committee members to request schools and community colleges to include concepts about social development in their curricula and urges the production of media programmes designed to enhance sound social concepts and practices especially in relation to women.

According to the JNCW plan, there will be serious efforts to enhance the role of health workers, especially in the mother and child care and to ensure equal treatment for women who head families on

similar footing with males at various government institutions.

The plan entails several other provisions for helping poor women, removing obstacles before women's work, and end violence against women.

The JNCW strategy is characterised by being the result of different studies.

To ensure adequate representation of all parties concerned, the JNCW board comprises the ministers of planning, labour and social development as well as the General Secretary of the Ministry of Education Representatives from the Noor Al Hussein Foundation, Civil Service Commission, the private sector, the General Federation of Jordanian Women representatives of women in the public, and academic and private sectors.

IRBID (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Badi'a Monday opened in Irbid the Princess Badi'a Educational Hospital which will contribute to improving medical services in the Irbid governorate.

Princess Badi'a, who was accompanied by Health Minister Abdul Rahim Malhas and several officials inspected the hospital's various sections and was familiarised with its equipment which will enable it to offer better health services to citizens in the governorate.

The princess was briefed by director general of the Irbid Health Department Abdul Hafiz Al Momani on the medical services offered by the hospital to citizens and plans to develop it and improve its services. Dr. Momani said there were plans to annex a neighbouring building to the hospital to expand it.

Hospital director Farouq Al Hmoud delivered an address in which he thanked Princess Badi'a for inaugurating the hospital and stressed that the hospital will play a distinguished role in serving the educational medical process in Jordan in cooperation with the Faculty of Medicine at the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST).

Dr. Hmoud also stressed the keenness of the hospital's staff to improve the level of medical researches in the governorate, pointing out that the first national conference on developing Jordanian hospitals will be hosted by the hospital

JTV apologises for offensive programme

By Saeda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

JTV Director Ibrarim Shahzadeh told the Jordan Times that JTV receives some similar programmes that are in "total contradiction with our traditions and beliefs that we do not broadcast."

In a children's cartoon programme broadcast Saturday afternoon, "God" appeared talking to children "in a way

that is inconsistent with our religious beliefs," a JTV official said.

JTV Director Ibrarim Shahzadeh told the Jordan Times that JTV receives some similar programmes that are in "total contradiction with our traditions and beliefs that we do not broadcast."

Mr. Shahzadeh said that the first reaction came from JTV staff who were monitoring the broadcast and was followed by the public who voiced their objection to the broadcasting of such a programme.

He explained that the pro-

Jubilee School — creativity in teaching

By Ica Wahbeh
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — In keeping with the belief that the teacher is the most important single factor in making success of the teaching process, the Jubilee School for gifted students is holding an eight-day workshop under the supervision of American education consultant Charles Elber.

Former founding director of North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics, the first state-sponsored, residential school in the U.S. and "in the world for gifted, talented students" Mr. Elber is steering the workshop, for teachers from the Jubilee School itself and from UNRWA, military, Salt pioneer centre and public schools of the Ministry of Education.

Operational since September 1993, only four months into the school's scholastic year, the school "is already a model and a training centre which shares training opportunities," according to Mr. Elber.

The workshop, as the entire creed of the school, holds it that students

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Chairman of the Board of Directors:

MAHMOUD AL KAYED

Director General:

MICHAEL AMAD

Editor-in-Chief:

GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:

Jordan Press Foundation,

University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephone: 6671716, 6701414

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Fax: 696183

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Logic island in Gulf

SOME ARAB Gulf countries still think that Jordan's quest for Arab reconciliation and unity of ranks is propelled by the Kingdom's need of economic aid and financial assistance. For this reason, it seems, the leaders of those countries demand that Jordan apologise for the stand it took during the Gulf war. Jordan, meanwhile, does not dismiss that it has direct national interests to reconcile with the Gulf countries. But Jordan reminds its Arab brothers that it took the stand it did in 1990 fully aware that it was the only principled and sound position we could take. Now, three and a half years after the eruption of the crisis, Jordan has been vindicated for taking that stance. Notwithstanding the Iraqi leadership's blunder of occupying Kuwait, which Jordan rejected totally, what followed was a blow to the nation, to those who allied themselves against Iraq and to those who failed to convince the others of the soundness of an Arab resolution to the conflict. Jordan, the Palestinians and Yemen included. But while the Palestinians continue to grapple with a formidable enemy — Israel — and Yemen with its eternal enemies — tribalism and internal divisions — Jordan continues to build and progress despite all the difficulties and without any assistance from our rich brothers in the Gulf.

Meanwhile Saudi Arabia, the Arab leader of the international alliance led by the U.S. which opted for a military, non-Arab solution to the conflict in the Gulf, is at last feeling the pinch of paying for the cost of the war. What Jordan sought at the outset of the crisis between Kuwait and Iraq was an Arab solution to the problem. Had that option won the day then, the Arabs would have been spared most of the cost of that war, both on the political and economic levels.

At the moment, the nation stands to lose even more because neither of its components, whether Saudi Arabia, Egypt or Syria, will measure up on its own to the three non-Arab powers in the region, Iran, Israel and Turkey. Only through their collective strength could the Arab countries be able to protect their interests in the Gulf, the Mediterranean or Palestine.

But not all Arab countries of the Gulf interpret Jordan's stand in 1990 and 1991 in strictly negative terms. Take, for example, the model that Qatar is trying to set for the members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, save for Oman and maybe also the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Qatar has taken the initiative to close Arab ranks by going as far as mending fences with Iraq itself. Although the Qatari foreign minister, Sheikh Hamad Ben Jassim Al Thani, who ended a visit to Jordan Sunday, sees Arab reconciliation as in need of "time and will take place in stages before Arabs can sit down at one table again and start a frank dialogue," his and his country's courage might set the example for the others to emulate.

Qatar, Jordan, Yemen and the United Arab Emirates are certainly not the strongest nor the richest Arab countries, but at least they see salvation in unity, and they are right.

PRESS COMMENTARIES

COMMENTING ON King Hussein's speech to a group of senior army officers two days ago Al Dastour daily newspaper said that there is no alternative to close Palestinian-Jordanian coordination in the course of working together to attain the desired peace. Jordanians and Palestinians are brothers with the same goals, having lived together for decades and having together pursued serious efforts towards regaining usurped Arab rights and lands, especially the Holy City of Jerusalem, said the paper. For its art, Jordan has been totally committed to a comprehensive settlement and has been working hard to build the PLO at all levels in the international arena, continued the paper. Therefore, close coordination efforts are the only solution at this stage and before the two sides can take further steps in this respect, it added. The two sides, suggested the paper, should now transcend the nice courtesy talk and move on by tackling practical steps towards charting a new formula for their bilateral relationship in the future. Priorities come first in the joint efforts and solidarity should characterise the relationship between the two sides as they approach the critical stage in their dealings with the Israelis, it added. The paper said that the Jordanians and Palestinians should work out a formula that would save the Jordanian and Palestinian people further sufferings and that the Palestinian-Jordanian interests can be protected.

A WRITER in Al Rai discussed the visit to Jordan by Qatar's Foreign Minister Sheikh Jassim Al Thani by describing it as a landmark in the Jordanian-Qatari relations and a very positive element in advancing Gulf Arab state's relations with Jordan. Mohamed Ramawi said the visit bears an indication that the leaders of the two countries are determined to pursue effort for ending inter-Arab differences, said the writer. Qatar has succeeded in its efforts within the Gulf states to dedicate its efforts aimed at maintaining good relations with other Arab countries and has succeeded in charting its own independent policies in the Arab World benefitting from the lessons of the past, said Ramawi. He said Qatar hopes that bilateral contacts and further efforts not only improve its own relations with the other Arab countries but also to bring about better relations in the other Arab states themselves. For its part, and in response to Qatar's mediation efforts, Jordan has clearly declared its readiness to meet the other Arab countries half way, "and continued. The writer said one can only pay tribute to the minister's endeavours at the political level.



When you appease fascism

By Anthony Lewis

BOSTON — A spectre is haunting Europe — the spectre of extreme nationalism. When it appeared two years ago, in Serbia, the United States and Western Europe decided not to treat it as a serious threat. They followed a policy of appeasement, a wheedling diplomacy that rewarded Serbian aggression.

Now the spectre is before us in a form not so easy to ignore: the strong showing in the Russian legislative elections of the party headed by Vladimir Zhirinovsky. He campaigned as an extreme nationalist and anti-Semitic, calling for restoration of the Russian empire and the use of nuclear weapons if necessary.

Menacing as Mr. Zhirinovsky is, the instinctive reaction in the West has again been to dismiss the threat. Mr. Zhirinovsky and his party are not something to be ignored or wished away. Their electoral triumph is the most dangerous development in Europe in a long time. On even the most cautious view of the implications, it overturns some basic premises of western foreign policy:

— The Clinton administration, single-minded in its support of President Boris Yeltsin, encouraged him in his decision to confront and finally dismiss the old parliament. The legislators with whom he now must deal will be far worse.

— Even with the great presidential power in his new constitution, Mr. Yeltsin will have a hard time holding to a policy of close cooperation with the United States. He will have to make gestures to the ultra-nationalist mood. The American vision of a Partnership for Peace is as good as dead.

— The administration, rightly concerned about nuclear proliferation, has focused on persuading Ukraine to give up the nuclear weapons it inherited from the Soviet Union. Given Mr. Zhirinovsky's threats, can anyone believe that Ukraine will do so now?

— The administration has promised President Yeltsin

foaming rhetoric. Hitler was just a silly little man, wasn't he? And besides, the Germans were a cultured people who would never let him carry out his barbaric threats.

Mr. Zhirinovsky and his party are not something to be ignored or wished away. Their electoral triumph is the most dangerous development in Europe in a long time. On even the most cautious view of the implications, it overturns some basic premises of western foreign policy:

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major financial support for his economic reform effort. After Mr. Zhirinovsky's election showing, will Congress vote that aid?

History — the history of the 1930s — is all too relevant in another way. It shows how extreme nationalism can start in one country and then spread its evil when democracies fail to resist.

"Menacing as Mr. Zhirinovsky is, the instinctive reaction in the West has again been to dismiss the threat. Mr. Zhirinovsky and his party are not something to be ignored or wished away. Their electoral triumph is the most dangerous development in Europe in a long time."

Mussolini's Fascist Italy seized Ethiopia in 1935; The world dithered; Britain and France did nothing to resist. That capitulation encouraged Hitler to begin his aggression.

When Hitler demanded dismemberment of Czechoslovakia in 1938, Britain and France gave way at Munich. Prime

Minister Neville Chamberlain said Britain had no interest in "a quarrel in a faraway country between people of whom we know nothing." Next came the attack on Poland, and World War II.

To recall that history is to realise the deadly parallel with recent events. For again we have seen what happens when a fascist takes power; this time Slobodan Milosevic in Serbia. Using nationalist demagoguery, he led Serbs to military aggression and genocide. And again the West failed to resist.

"Why should we care what happens in the Balkans?" Many Americans have asked that during the last two years, as Bosnia was dismembered. Can there be any doubt about the answer now?

In these two years we have seen the rise of neofascist gangs in Germany and the near victory of neofascist candidates in Italian municipal elections. West European societies are strong enough to deal with those threats, we believe. But Russia?

The spectre could and should have been dispelled in Serbia. A firm western policy — the policy that Margaret Thatcher would have followed if she had been in office — would have stopped Mr. Milosevic, and discouraged the spread of nationalist extremism that now confronts us with Vladimir Zhirinovsky — The New York Times.

The courage to build and reform

By Akram A. Baker

HAMBURG — The agreement signed Sept. 13 between Yasser Arafat, the PLO chairman, and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel signaled the beginning of a new era between two peoples, two dire enemies. Much has been said and written about whether the agreement will succeed or whether it will collapse like a house of cards in a strong wind. Looking at the recent violence, it would appear yet again that any attempt at peacemaking in the volatile Middle East is destined to fail.

But I do not believe that the level of violence in the occupied territories is the true barometer of success or failure. What we must be looking for is what the Palestinians and their leadership make of it.

If the Palestinian national movement, as embodied by the Palestine Liberation Organisation, is able to transform itself from a liberation movement into an efficient representative government, it will bring salvation. If not, it will lead to disaster.

The Palestinian people have suffered and sacrificed too much to settle for a flag, a passport and a soccer team. What they need and deserve is a state that will protect their legitimate political, civil, human and social rights; a state based on equality, pluralism, the rule of law and secularism.

What should be done to achieve this goal? There are some basic steps which should be taken regardless of where the negotiating process happens to stand at the moment.

First, Palestinian national institutions — for education, health care and national insurance, to name a few — must be established and developed. Corrupt and unwieldy institutions and organisations (which are rampant in the occupied territories and in the Palestinian diaspora) must be reformed or shut down.

The PLO itself is in great need of serious reforms.

Political cadres, civil servants and bureaucrats must be trained. The security forces

must have the respect for human rights drilled into them. An important question is where our future police cadets are to be trained. I do not believe that Israel or the Arab states should instruct our police. A better alternative would be the European countries, and especially Scandinavian countries.

Second, economic planning must move out of first gear (where we are now) and onto practical issues. Regardless of what economic system we ultimately choose, some things can be done immediately, such as ending the self-destructive and self-defeating commercial strikes. The local economy needs to be nurtured, not buried.

A national economy, encompassing all sectors and walks of life, should be built from the bottom up, on solid foundations. Small industries, foreign investment, an open market, and self-reliance should be the buzzwords of today. Corruption needs to be ruthlessly uprooted. Independent monitors and auditors should be brought in to oversee all spending. This is necessary if we are to regain the people's confidence in the financial policies of their leaders.

All of this does not excuse the Israelis of their responsibilities either. There must be no bunting of "wanted" Palestinians by the Israeli military. We need more goodwill and fewer funerals. A full pardon of all people convicted of crimes or acts of political violence committed during the occupation would reduce the level of strife immediately. If we are to turn a page in history, we need to forgive, if not forget.

Mr. Arafat will need more courage to reform the Palestinian national movement, and himself, than he showed in offering his hand to his Israeli enemy that fine autumn day in Washington. But I feel optimistic. There are highly capable, competent and efficient minds among the Palestinian people, both within and outside the PLO, who can propel this horrific conflict out of the darkness and into the light of the future.

The writer, a former adviser to Faisal Husseini, who headed the Palestinian peace talks delegation, is currently studying in Hamburg. This article is reprinted from the International Herald Tribune.

Bosnia's year of disintegration

By Helen Despic-Popovic
Agence France Presse

One effect of the plan had been the defection of Bosnia's Croats from the government alliance as they fought with Muslims to secure more territory prior to the division of the republic envisaged by the plan.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) forecasts Slovak unemployment will rise to 18 per cent by 1995, compared with eight per cent for the Czech Republic.

The OECD recording a five per cent drop in Slovak gross domestic product in 1993, compared with zero growth in the Czech Republic. The organisation forecast Czech GDP to grow by two per cent in 1994 and five per cent in 1995. Slovak GDP in 1994 is forecast to rise, rising to two per cent in 1995.

Slovaks point out that their country had an unfavourable starting position when Czechoslovakia broke apart.

The smaller and less advanced partner in the federation, it began life as an independent country with an economy dependent on outmoded heavy engineering and arms factories whose traditional Warsaw Pact markets had disappeared.

Independent Slovakia is on its third economy minister and its second foreign minister.

There has been no minister of privatisation, an important job in a country in transition, since Lubomir Dolgov resigned in June saying the government did not support free market reforms.

Political opponents and foreign diplomats blame the turmoil mostly on Mr. Meciar, a pugnacious ex-bother whose popularity has fallen to less than 20 per cent from 60 at the height of the 1992 campaign for Slovak independence which led to partition.

Mr. Meciar's domestic and foreign critics accuse him of being insensitive to the rights of Slovakia's gypsy and Hungarian minorities and of provoking disputes with neighbouring Hungary.

Less than a month before the first anniversary of the Czechoslovak split, Slovakia's 600,000-strong Hungarian minority began campaigning for self-rule, a potentially explosive demand in an area where Hungarian-Slovak coexistence is always uneasy.

"It is necessary to establish a sort of self-government and a special province with special rights and self-administration," said an open letter in an Hungarian-language newspaper signed by 100 mayors of towns and villages in southern Slovakia.

"Slovakia is in a vicious circle," said Frantisek Sebej, head of the M.E.S.A. Consulting Agency. "The more it is perceived as unstable, the less foreign investment it gets.

That in turn, slows economic transformation which we need to create jobs. Unemployment

is fueling discontent, and so on..."

Slovak unemployment is 15 per cent, more than three times that of the Czech Republic, at less than four per cent one of the lowest in the world.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) forecasts Slovak unemployment will rise to 18 per cent by 1995, compared with eight per cent for the Czech Republic.

Peace initiatives and ceasefires came and went, and with talks stalled at the end of a year marked by the breakdown of the Croat-Muslim alliance against the Serbs and the appearance of divisions among each of the warring communities, the international community was showing increasing signs of wishing to wash its hands of the problem.

The latest plan to date, provisionally accepted in late July by the Bosnian government, provided for the division of Bosnia into three mini-states, with the Muslims — and a 30 per cent population of non-Muslims — locked into a central strip running north to south loosely linked to pockets in the east and northwest.

The plan broke down over the Serb refusal to concede a further 3 to 4 per cent more territory demanded by the Bosnian government. Subsequently the Serbs demanded the division of Sarajevo into "twin cities."

Hopes of a settlement were raised during talks in Athens in May with the acceptance of the Vance-Owen plan — named after United Nations and European Community mediators Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen — by all three sides. Owen was moved to declare a "bright new day in the Balkans."

The latest plan was rejected by Bosnia's Serbs voted overwhelmingly in a referendum not to give up the territory they were required to concede under the plan. Mr. Vance resigned, giving way to Norwegian diplomat Thorvald Stoltenberg.

LETTERS

Light for life

To the Editor:

Electricity is important and very useful in our life. In the past people used oil lamps, but in these days we use electricity for all kinds of things that make our life easier and more pleasant. We cannot live without electricity anymore as our lives are completely dependent on it.



Yead Amin,
8th grade,
Jubieha School,
Amman.

Events warrant coordination'

(Continued from page 1)

If all the demands for coordination and cooperation have boiled down to opening banks, then the truth is that it is the only thing that Jordan and Israel would agree on. "We do not want to crowd all strategic issues between us and Palestinians into the eye of the needle — banking. It is not fair," Anani said.

He said the rush over the initial stages of the Jordanian-Israeli bank agreement "gave the impression that Jordan was only interested in the economic issue."

But while Jordan was protecting its interests by stressing the need to coordinate with Palestinians, the latter was not unaware of the Jordanian sensitivity over getting something tangible that would dictate the PLO-Israel agreement would culminate in a Palestinian state.

"The Palestinians, however, had something tangible in the economic agreement (with Jordan) that as shown because you want to after a symbol of sovereignty," Dr. Anani said.

"Jordan was asked to wait for Palestinians to arrive at an agreement with Israel over something the possibility of which happened very low," Dr. Anani added, asking whether this was a "trade-off" that Jordan should accept.

He said that Jordan should not have been made to involve itself, however indirectly, in the issue of sovereignty and identity when it was not a problem with the Jordanians but an "Israeli-American problem."

"To pass the buck to Jordan was very clever Israeli game and I am sure that some Palestinians fell for it," Dr. Anani said in reference to some reports by some Israeli officials that Israel's rejection of giving

Palestinians a semblance of authority over bridges and border points was because "Jordan rejects it."

"The issue of borders is only a political issue that Israel has expanded to encompass all issues including tariffs, customs, controls, travellers, security, etc." Dr. Anani said, asking "where does one draw the line between the sovereignty that Palestinians want and the Israel which wants to alienate any issue of sovereignty?"

"The borders now encompass issues that cut across Jordanian interests including the one of trade between the two banks," Dr. Anani said adding that if the "Jordanians are to pay tariffs on their goods then Jordan would impose tariffs on goods coming in from the West Bank and whole thing would stop being considered internal trade as it is now."

He said that when Jordan asks for coordination on an issue like this one, it is trying to achieve "symmetry in movement between the two banks similar to the one that exists for Palestinians travelling between the occupied territories and Israel."

"We want to move away from that asymmetry which makes it cheaper and easier to cross into Israel than to come to Jordan because it now works to the advantage of Israel — there is a built-in bias," he said, adding that Israel is working to "perpetuate the status quo economically."

In conclusion, Dr. Anani said that Jordan is clear "that this mess necessitates settling down and talking (between PLO and Jordan)." But in response to a question on what Jordan intends to do if the coordination talks fail, he dismissed the possibility saying that Jordan "is not negotiating with an enemy but an ally."

Jordan, Egypt to revitalise panel

(Continued from page 1)

the need for closer Arab coordination in the peace process.

Mr. Hassan also underlined the importance of economic cooperation as complementary to political cooperation in what appeared to be a reference to the joint committee, whose mandate includes setting up joint ventures and discussing trade and other related issues.

Mr. Musa described his talks as success and that the political aspect of his discussions covered the "past, present and future of the peace process."

Egypt has been trying to narrow the differences between Israel and the PLO in their negotiations to implement Palestinian autonomy as envisaged in the Sept. 13 self-government accord. Cairo has been using the negotiations.

Mr. Musa denied reports that Egypt was pressuring the LO to accept Israeli proposals and said that Cairo was only willing to help the Palestinians whenever needed and had to do so by the Palestinians.

He said he was willing to sit Israel to break the deadlock in the Israeli-PLO negotiations, but added that what was more important than mediation was "the honest implementation of the (autonomy) accord according to its spirit which talks about withdrawal and talks about establishing a national Palestinian interests."

Israel, PLO spar

(Continued from page 1)

an signature on its document. "There were ideas on which we agreed. But it was only ideas and they have to be negotiated."

In Oslo, an Israeli foreign ministry official and a PLO representative, both in Oslo to receive a Norwegian honour, on Monday expressed hope that the negotiations would overcome the stalemate.

"I was in touch with occupied Jerusalem, and there are very intense contacts going on between the PLO and Israel and the involvement of other governments," Uri Savir, a director general with Israel's foreign ministry, told a news conference.

"As far as we are concerned we remain committed. We have no doubt the same is true for the Palestinians and we will find the way and means to renew the negotiations," he added.

Dr. Shaih accused Israel of "blackmail" and said the PLO would not accept ultimatums. He said Israel was trying to pressure the Palestinians by accusing the PLO of hacking down a deal. But the organisation was still ready to return to the negotiating table in Taba on Tuesday, he said.

"If it's necessary, we are ready to ask Egypt to arbitrate on this question so that we can identify the party which is failing to implement the declaration of principles" signed in Washington on Sept. 13, he said.

"There was no accord in Cairo," he insisted, challenging Israel to show any Palesti-

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He told journalists, "there are some steps in the right direction on the part of the PLO but its proposals are insufficient."

In Cairo, Dr. Shaath said his organisation could ask Egypt to "arbitrate" on the dispute.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Dr. Musa sided with the PLO by saying that there was "more than one document ... drawn up by Israel and the PLO last week in Cairo."

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"If it's necessary, we

Malaysia launches full-fledged Islamic financial system

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) — Malaysia Monday became the first country to have a fully fledged Islamic financial system with the launch of an interbank money-market that operates on an Islam-sanctioned profit-sharing concept.

Nor Mohammad Yakcop, adviser to the central bank, Bank Negara, said predominantly Muslim Malaysia was also the only country to have a Muslim financial system that ran parallel to the conventional banking system practised by the West.

Many bankers, however, see the Muslim system as a sham to hide interest payments or "riba" which are forbidden under Islamic law.

Mr. Nor said the launch capped a year of planning by the central bank to work out the financial instruments.

"The Islamic interbank money market operates on the basis of Al Mudharabah or profit-sharing, which simply means that the provider of funds will earn a profit from his investments instead of being paid interest," he said.

Bankers also began Monday to trade in short-term bankers' acceptance on a profit-sharing basis.

The profit earned from the money lent would be shared between the provider and borrower on a ratio that could

range from 70:30, 80:20 or 90:10 depending on the loan period, he said.

"The profit-sharing ratios will be liberalised by the central bank in due course when everybody is comfortable with the new system to allow the ratios to be negotiated between the investing and receiving institutions," he said.

The other countries which have an Islamic banking system are Pakistan, Iran and Sudan, but they do not have the conventional banking system and an Islamic interbank money market facility.

Indonesia, which has an Islamic banking system running alongside the conventional banking practices, also does not have an interbank money market facility, Mr. Nor said.

Bankers say the Malaysian development is a significant move that should be emulated by other Muslim countries to stem the large outflow of funds from Islamic countries to non-Islamic banks in the West.

"It is an irony that some Islamic countries are borrowing substantially from non-Islamic institutions in the West, while other Islamic countries are depositing funds with them," said central bank governor Jaffar Hussein.

Islamic banking in Malaysia was pioneered by the country's sole Islamic bank, Bank Islam Malaysia BHD.

Asian stocks begin year with a bang

HONG KONG (R) — Asian markets started the year with a bang Monday.

They were led by Hong Kong's Hang Seng index which finished the day at a record high of 12,086.49, and by the two Philippine markets and Singapore which also ended at all-time highs.

The dollar ended the day lower against the mark in thin trading. It finished at 1.738/48 against the previous New York close of 1.7377/87.

Against the yen it closed at 111.73/83 against the New York close of 111.80/85.

Stock markets were closed because of holidays in New Zealand, Japan, Taiwan and Thailand.

Brokers said buy orders from overseas institutions continued to pour into the Hong Kong market.

The blue-chip Hang Seng index climbed 198.10 points, or 1.67 per cent, to 12,086.49 points after the market staged a strong surge in afternoon trade. It ended just short of an all-time high reached earlier in the afternoon of 12,115.56.

"Psychologically people are not really prepared to sell. They are setting their sights on 14,000," said one broker.

The Manila composite index leapt 75.43 points to finish at 3,271.51, against the previous record of 3,196.08 points set on the last trading day in 1993. The Makati market made a

similar two per cent jump to end at 3,362.48 points.

"We saw profit-taking in second-line issues, especially towards closing, but what led the market to continue its ascent were the heavyweights like PLDT, PNB and Meralco," said Rolando Pineda, vice-president at Tower Securities.

The bulls also started the new year with vigour in Singapore, chasing the 30-share Straits Times Industrial index to a record closing high of 2,441.53.

The index was up 15.85 points from Friday's close. This compares with the previous closing high of 2,426.85 set last Wednesday.

"Retail demand is still very

strong," one broker said, adding investors are buying on expectations of more gains in the next few weeks.

Kuala Lumpur share prices stayed firm on the back of further institutional and speculative buying and the index closed up 13.53 points to 1,288.85, after earlier setting a high of 1,290.86.

Gold closed marginally higher in Hong Kong in quiet trading. It finished at \$390.80/391.30 an ounce, up slightly from New York's \$390.40/90 close on Friday.

Spot crude oil prices in Asia were little changed from London's levels on Friday with February Brent bid around \$13.20.

China's premier urges economic caution

BEIJING (R) — Chinese Premier Li Peng, warning rapid price rises could bring instability, urged caution on economic speed and inflation in interviews published Monday.

Despite his warnings, economists said, China's overheating economy would surge again with both high growth and high inflation in 1994.

Mr. Li, who helped order the 1989 army crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrators set off in part by runaway inflation, vowed vigilance against price rises and said the economy should grow at only nine per cent this year after two years of 13 per cent growth.

"The better our situation, the more cautious we should be in pushing forward the reform drive," he told the official China Daily.

He made clear the government was extremely concerned about inflation, which is raging at well over 20 per cent per year in major cities and is at its highest rate for nearly five years.

China's capital, Beijing, recently reimposed price controls on crucial goods like grain and edible oil after the price of rice zoomed by up to 30 per cent in a matter of weeks.

Government officials have vowed to bring the nationwide grain price back under control.

"Too rapid strides in prices reform would cause instability, and the recent panic buying of grain in some areas is a lesson to all," Mr. Li said.

The premier told the official Xinhua News Agency the State Council (cabinet) has proposed a target for economic growth in 1994 of nine per cent.

The economy grew by 13 per cent last year and by 12.8 per

cent in 1992.

Mr. Li explained that two consecutive years of high growth had burdened some sectors of the economy and created bottlenecks.

"A relatively relaxed environment is necessary for sustained economic growth."

While Mr. Li said he was confident China would be able to press forward with reforms that will eventually free oil, electricity and rail freight prices, he promised the measures would not go faster than the country could endure.

"We can never afford to lower our guard on the issue of prices," Mr. Li said.

"With every major reform measure, we will take into account the endurance of the country, the enterprises and the people, and adhere to the principle of (going) step by step," Mr. Li said.

But economists said China was likely to have another boom year with all the attendant problems.

"It's only wishful thinking that the economy won't grow so fast," said one Hong Kong-based analyst.

Even the official China Daily last week said the economy usually grew at a rate four to five percentage points higher than the official plan.

Political analysts said Mr. Li and other leaders were beginning to position themselves as cautious voices in case the economy did have serious problems later in the year.

Acknowledging China's reforms had benefited some regions more than others, Mr. Li promised the growing wealth gap between the booming coastal area and other less developed regions would not split the country.

Belgrade tries to break the back of hyper-inflation

BELGRADE (AFP) — Yugoslavia will act this month to curb hyper-inflation wrecking its economy and will ask the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to help it consolidate a new dinar — worth one billion old ones.

Yugoslav Prime Minister Radoje Konje submitted a monetary recovery programme to the IMF at the end of December and has asked the IMF to send experts to Yugoslavia "before Jan. 14" to assess the programme's viability, the newspaper Borba reported Sunday.

The report quoted Mr. Konje as saying his government

would "stabilise" the dinar starting Jan. 17 taking as a basis the reserves of the Yugoslav central bank plus the deposits of Yugoslav commercial banks now frozen in foreign countries because of U.N. sanctions.

"We will ask the sanctions committee of the United Nations to release these assets which we need to support our national currency," Borba quoted Mr. Konje as saying.

The economy is in chaos and production has declined inexorably since U.N. sanctions were first imposed in 1991 to punish Serbia.

Industrial output fell by 21 per cent in 1992 in the rump Yugoslavia comprising Serbia and tiny Montenegro.

The overall decline was 30 per cent between October 1992 and October 1993 with an acceleration to nearly 34 per cent in the first ten months of last year, according to the weekly Ekonomika Politika.

A new dinar worth a billion old ones was to be introduced on Jan. 1. The old dinar went

into circulation only in October with six zeros less than its predecessor.

Inflation which exceeded 20,000 per cent in November, was estimated at nearly 200,000 per cent at the end of December.

Inflation has been running at 30 per cent a day with prices — some in the billions — changing every few hours.

The economy is in chaos and production has declined inexorably since U.N. sanctions were first imposed in 1991 to punish Serbia.

Up to now the government has tried to cope with the crisis by printing more and bigger banknotes. At the end of December it put into circulation a 500 billion dinar note which a few hours later was trading for \$8.

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Iraq has no intention to devalue dinar

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq, striving to boost confidence in its sinking dinar, said Monday it had no intention of devaluing the currency.

"There is no intention at all to lower the value of the Iraqi currency," Baghdad newspaper said, quoting the governor of Iraq's central bank, Tareq Talib Al Tukmaj.

His statement came at a time when the dinar was plunging against the U.S. dollar. It stood at 41 per dollar on the black market. The dinar's official rate is 3.2.

There is much conjecture here about what the government, battling against soaring prices, will do with the huge amounts of money in circulation.

Some say it will seize bank accounts. Others say it will devalue the dinar or change the currency.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY JANUARY 4, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES:

The Libra Moon is squared four ways today through Venus, Mars, Sun and Mercury causing annoying delays in plans you are completing. Use any extra time you have to doublecheck related facts and figures.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19)

Search for more progressive ideas this morning which can be put into operation quickly. Be firm this evening when highjinks may be bruise because they forgo time and energy to home and family.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 22)

Try to get all business matters, shopping, etc., handled before lunch so that you can then devote your time and energies to home and family.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20)

Make collections and pay obligations early in the morning. Be careful later you don't waste time with some new friend at the expense of a good partner and work that is practical.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21)

Improve appearance by proper grooming or changing hair style in the morning. Then get busy devising more modern and efficient ways to increase income so that you have a real abundance.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20)

A fine morning for investigating an really getting the facts. The be of assistance to close ties for a good understanding.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21)

Get to beauty or barber shop early in the morning and then set up appointments for social or recreational activities. Get task done in the afternoon but be precise and meticulous.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20)

Every opportunity is yours this morning to handle civic affairs well and make the future brighter. Take care you do not quarrel with a pal in the evening.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21)

Any task that awaits you can be done quickly and efficiently in the morning, then get out with close ties for a good understanding.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19)

Follow advice of a truly good friend in the morning. Improve your position, as well as social contacts and handle all accumulated small task in the evening instead of feeling grumpy.

FINANCIAL MARKETS

U.S. Dollar

British Pound

French Franc

Japanese Yen

European Currency

Gold

Crude Oil

Interest Rates

Commodities

Stocks

Bonds

Corporate Bonds

Government Bonds

Long Term Bonds

Short Term Bonds

Corporate Bonds

Government Bonds

Long Term Bonds

Short Term Bonds

Corporate Bonds

Government Bonds

Long Term Bonds

Short Term Bonds

Corporate Bonds

Government Bonds

Long Term Bonds

Short Term Bonds

Corporate Bonds

Government Bonds

Long Term Bonds

Short Term Bonds

Corporate Bonds

Government Bonds

Long Term Bonds

India, Oman tie up for oil refinery

NEW DELHI (R) — India's state-owned Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (BPCL) and the Oman Oil Company (OOC) have agreed to establish a \$1.72 billion oil refinery in India, company officials have said.

They said that under an agreement signed in Bombay between the two companies the six-million-tonne capacity refinery will be set up 1997 at Bina in the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh.

The companies will each have a 26 per cent stake in the project with the 48 per cent of equity balance subscribed by the public.

Their domestic Press Trust of India (PTI) news agency quoted a BPCL statement as saying the Indian government had approved the setting up of

a joint venture company to execute the project.

The refinery would include single point mooring facilities and a crude oil terminal on the west coast as well as a cross-country crude pipeline.

Officials said the agreement followed a memorandum of understanding reached among the Indian and Omani governments and the two companies.

An agreement has also been reached for supply of crude oil between the two companies, the statement said, giving no details.

The Oman Oil Company, registered in Bermuda, has also signed a memorandum of understanding with India's state-owned Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. to set up another refinery in western India.

Inflation worry hangs over China

BEIJING (R) — The twin spectres of inflation and failing state industries still hang over China's booming economy, which has just racked up its second consecutive year of high growth.

China's economic boss, Vice Premier Zhu Rongji, has demanded the price of grain be brought under control so that an ambitious programme of market-oriented economic reforms can be carried out this year, official media has reported.

Last month the prices of grain and edible oil shot up by 30 per cent or more in some places in a matter of days, even though China has had a record harvest this year.

The price of grain and (edible) oil are the foundation prices for the market," Mr. Zhu said.

The current momentum of higher prices must be swiftly controlled and prices brought

back to a reasonable level in order to prevent a chain reaction."

Ye Zhen, spokesman for the State Statistical Bureau, told a news conference that China had to juggle the goals of fast and healthy economic development.

"1994 is the most crucial year for our country's reform, opening up (to the outside world) and economic construction," he said.

While gross domestic product (GDP), a measure of the size of the economy, grew by about 13 per cent in 1993 after 12.8 per cent growth in 1992, inflation raged at twice this year's growth and inflation levels will stay high.

More than 37 per cent of China's lumbering state industries, backbone of the old socialist economy, are still losing money, with the amount of their red ink 20 per cent higher at the end of November than it was a year earlier.

Many of the reforms planned for the near future will actually contribute to inflation and to the woes of state industry, economists believe.

per cent in 1992.

The Chinese government has paid great attention to the price changes," Mr. Ye said.

He said he believed the economic growth rate could be brought down to a more sustainable 10 per cent next year.

But with China continuing to pump money into the economy, in part to keep failing state industries afloat, many economists worry that this year's growth and inflation levels will stay high.

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Paris, Frankfurt stocks hit record closing highs

PARIS (AFP) — The Paris Bourse and the Frankfurt stock market set new records Monday in the year's first trading session, while the London market was closed for a bank holiday.

The Paris Bourse moved into record territory in a market encouraged by a trend to lower French interest rates — universally seen as needed to boost a lagging economy and counter high unemployment.

The CAC 40 index opened with a 0.23 per cent dip, but got onto an up trend that took it over the 2,300-point mark for the first time ever in the early afternoon. The indicator then eased a bit to end at 2,290, up a hefty 56 points or 0.98 per cent on the day to a record closing high of 2,290.

That makes the indicator's

fifth record closing high since Dec. 23. It posted a strong 22 per cent gain in 1993.

The Bourse was boosted by a trend to lower French interest rates, as leading banks announced a 0.20 per cent cut in their prime rate in the afternoon to 7.95 per cent — the first time in two decades the strategic rate has been below eight per cent.

In view of the slack performance of European economies, most observers expect further rate cuts in the next few months — a development that would naturally encourage the stock markets.

German Bundesbank President Hans Tietmeyer expects

lower German inflation this year, so that lower German interest rates would appear a

surprised.

The record came despite an early 30-point drop for the DAX in the morning. One dealer commented that "that gave investors the chance to buy stocks at slightly lower prices" that prevailed at the end of last week. "If the market had lost 50 points, I would have been at all surprised."

AMERICAN FINANCIAL MARKET

AMERICAN FINANCIAL MARKET BUREAU CENTER AMMAN - AMMANIAK

CREATED MARKET DIAE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 02/01/1994

COMPANY'S NAME	TRADED	PREV.	OPENING	CLOSING
	WEEK	WEEK	WEEK	WEEK
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	20,072	186,000	186,500	186,000
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	70,182	41,500	41,750	41,500
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	196,132	41,500	41,750	41,500
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	25,822	2,040	2,070	2,040
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	52,932	2,980	3,020	2,980
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	42,579	2,140	2,150	2,140
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	10,955	4,150	4,180	4,150
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	3,979	4,000	4,020	4,000
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	2,154	2,650	2,770	2,650
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	622,576	1,820	1,850	1,820
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	33,250	3,790	3,850	3,760
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	49,676	2,240	2,270	2,240
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	1,950	19,300	19,500	19,300
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	101,475	3,000	3,050	3,010
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	16,105	2,220	2,250	2,220
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	3,025	3,900	4,020	3,900
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	2,082	1,540	1,610	1,500
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	7,700	2,200	2,250	2,200
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	285	2,800	2,850	2,800
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	4,350	2,170	2,200	2,170
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	515	2,400	2,450	2,400
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	1,098	0,360	0,360	0,350
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	42,334	2,450	2,480	2,450
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	16,059	30,000	30,000	30,000
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	15,185	10,800	10,700	10,700
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	44,303	8,270	8,300	8,250
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	2,062	3,050	3,080	3,050
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	285	2,800	2,850	2,800
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	4,350	2,170	2,200	2,170
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120 die in Siberia plane crash

MOSCOW (R) — All 120 people on board a Russian plane, including 16 foreigners, were killed Monday when it crashed in the icy wastes of Siberia and ploughed through farmhouses in Russia's worst aviation accident in nine years.

A spokeswoman for the State Committee for Emergencies said the captain of the Tupolev-154 craft had reported one of its engines catching fire minutes after taking off from the Siberian city of Irkutsk on a flight to Moscow.

As he turned back to the airport the other two jets failed. It was in the air for just 12 minutes.

"Then the plane disappeared from the screens of the radar control," she said. "Everyone died, they burnt to death."

The bodies were scattered over a three-kilometre radius. The area is cordoned off by police and troops of a military academy, "she said. "They are looking for the corpses."

The spokeswoman said the plane had apparently exploded in mid-air. But Alexander Kamensky, head of the Irkutsk Civil Defence Service,

said this was not the case.

He told Reuters by telephone that the plane crashed in a snow-covered field near Mamony, a village of about 100 people deep in the Siberian wilderness.

He said it careered across the ice before hitting a farmhouse and bursting into flames. It then ploughed through high-tension electricity pylons and hit two more farmhouses before breaking up 300 metres short of the village.

"About 50 corpses are recognisable, 10 are badly burnt and the rest have been blown to bits," said Mr. Kamensky, who had just visited the site of Russia's worst crash in nearly a decade.

Eighty-two people were killed in an air crash near the industrial town of Ivanovo, near Moscow, in 1992.

In 1984, 150 were killed when a similar TU-154 hit a fuel tanker on the runway of the main airport of the Siberian city of Omsk and burst into flames.

The aircraft which crashed Monday was operated by Baikal Air, an offshoot of the giant state-owned Aeroflot airline.

Bosnians, Croats to meet; fighting eases

SARAJEVO (R) — Fighting eased in central Bosnia Monday and Croats announced that peace talks with the Muslim-led Bosnian government would be held in Vienna this week.

Croatian Foreign Minister Mate Granic will meet Muslim Prime Minister Habs Silajdzic to discuss territorial disputes in the Bosnian conflict as well as humanitarian questions, Mr. Granic's spokeswoman Ivana Moric told Reuters Monday.

The meeting is scheduled to begin at 1300 GMT Tuesday, Ms. Moric said. All three warring factions are to hold peace negotiations in Geneva in a fortnight's time.

Relations between the two sides deteriorated over the past few months after Muslim-led government forces launched an offensive against Bosnian Croats in the strategic Liva Valley in central Bosnia.

At the weekend, the Muslim government signalled further fighting, predicting a new push to capture the valley if the 15,000 Croats they have surrounded there did not leave.

The government wants the valley to secure its hold on central Bosnia and shelter hundreds of thousands of Muslim refugees driven from their homes elsewhere by Serb and Croat forces.

Croatian President Franjo Tudjman and other senior Croatian officials last week hinted at possible military intervention to help their kin in the beleaguered republic.

Sources at the Geneva conference on former Yugoslavia said that European Union and United Nations mediators Lord Owen and Thorvald Stenberg would also attend the Vienna meeting.

They said the talks would focus on how to secure access to the Adriatic Sea for a predominantly Muslim rump Bosnian Republic as part of a peace deal.

In talks in Brussels last month, the three warring parties agreed to set up working groups on four key issues blocking an accord, including the question of access to the sea.

Tuesday's talks are also expected to cover a ceasefire agreement which was supposed to last throughout the Christmas season but which has been violated repeatedly by all sides.

The U.N. Protection Force in Sarajevo said Monday the fighting in central Bosnia was abating.

Koreas prepare for U.S., Japan recognition

SEOUL (AFP) — North Korea has appointed top officials, including the brother of President Kim Il-Sung, to prepare for a sudden rapprochement with Washington and Tokyo, South Korea's Yonhap News Agency said Monday.

The report came as South Korea's foreign minister said Seoul was also preparing for the change amid reports of a breakthrough in the international dispute over North Korea's suspected nuclear weapons programme.

Yonhap quoted an unnamed official here as saying that the

Communist Party in Pyongyang had named two special top-level teams to cope with "a sudden and rapid rapprochement" with Tokyo, Washington and South Korea.

The United States is still technically at war with North Korea.

It is divided from the South by the last standing frontier of the cold war — the heavily fortified 38th Parallel — and has since March raised fears it was planning to use nuclear arms to try a suicidal military takeover of the South.

There was no official or in-

dependent confirmation of the detailed Yonhap report, the first of its kind, which tended to confirm separate reports of a breakthrough in low-level talks between Washington and Pyongyang in New York.

The report named Kim Yong-Ju, the recently reinstated younger brother of Kim Il-Sung, 81, as being in charge of both teams.

The teams are "similar to the task forces that China formed to prepare with normalization of diplomatic ties in the 1970s," the official told Yonhap.

Republicans demand independent Clinton probe

WASHINGTON (R) — Republican congressional leaders Sunday demanded an independent counsel to investigate President Bill Clinton's dealing in an Arkansas real estate venture and failed savings and loan...

Republicans took advantage of the quiet New Year's Day weekend to create a loud drumbeat of criticism, calling on Attorney General Janet Reno to appoint an independent counsel to look into Mr. Clinton's role as Arkansas governor in the Whitewater Development Corp.

But at the same time the Republicans opposed renewing a law that codifies the appointment of independent prosecutors.

"I think it's up to Janet Reno now to step back and appoint a counsel, and for the president's own good, get it behind us," Senate Minority leader Robert Dole of Kansas said on NBC's *Meet The Press* programme.

George Stephanopoulos, senior adviser to the president, replied flatly on ABC's *This Week With David Brinkley* programme: "There is no need at this time for an independent counsel." He said the matter was being investigated by the Justice Department.

And Mr. Stephanopoulos sarcastically hailed the "conversion" of Republicans who in the past have opposed the special prosecutor law.

But Gen. Dole said there was no need to renew the special prosecutor law, which provided an independent prosecutor chosen by a three-judge panel instead of the attorney general. The law expired in 1992.

"She [Reno] doesn't need the special prosecutor law," said Gen. Dole, who voted against renewing it. "She has the authority now to appoint independent counsel."

The Himalayan territory has

been divided into Indian and Pakistan-ruled parts.

"Both sides recognised that there are basic divergences," it said, adding that it was agreed that "sincere efforts would be made to resolve the problem."

The statement emphasised the need for continuing dialogue, but no date or venue was announced.

Mr. Dixit and Mr. Khan, at a joint press conference, said the talks addressed "all aspects" of the Kashmir problem.

As a result, alliance officials

and diplomats say, there is no chance of offering Eastern European states membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in the near future.

The key to European security is Russia and there is broad agreement that we simply cannot afford to alienate Moscow," said one diplomat, who asked not to be identified.

"If we took on Eastern European nations, we would simply risk pushing the Russians too far. Partnership for peace offers everyone a chance for cooperation and does not discriminate."

But the alliance also faces criticism that it is not doing enough to help countries such as Hungary and Poland which have pushed ahead with reforms and are nervous about growing instability, ethnic and nationalist tensions in Europe.

The success of extreme

Reynolds tries to save N. Ireland deal

DUBLIN (R) — Irish Prime Minister Albert Reynolds hinted in remarks published Monday at concessions towards the IRA's political wing.

Sinn Fein, to salvage an Anglo-Irish peace deal on Northern Ireland from collapse.

It also said the government had "made insistent exhortations for dialogue and a search for a peaceful end to the situation created by the armed group," but gave no indication that contact had been made with the rebels to arrange talks.

The Zapatistas said Saturday that they had declared war on

demilitarisation of the northern conflict."

The term "persuaders" was seen as a concession towards Sinn Fein, whose leaders complain that the Anglo-Irish statement does not put pressure on the Protestant majority in Northern Ireland to accept an eventual unification of Ireland.

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Minister John Major Sunday when he ruled out any alteration or negotiation of the text of their Downing Street Declaration on Northern Ireland.

Martin McGuinness, one of Sinn Fein's top officials, told British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) radio the IRA wanted to know whether the statement represented a first step towards British withdrawal from Northern Ireland.

He said they wanted clarification about whether "this signalled the beginning of the process of bringing about an end to British rule in Ireland."

David Trimble of the Ulster Unionist Party, which wants the province to remain British, accused Mr. Reynolds of trying to appease the IRA.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Sampras in Qatar lambasts Becker

DOHA (AP) — Boris Becker is not here to defend his title because his wife is expecting a baby. But the \$525,000 Qatar Open which was to start Monday packs other big names irked by the German star's suggestions that some of them use drugs. World No. 1 Pete Sampras arrived Sunday and became the second tennis star to lash out at Becker from Doha. "It's not an accurate comment and I was very surprised to hear Boris say it," said Sampras. "As far as I know, nobody takes steroids or any sort of enhancer. I certainly do not." Sampras noted that the Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP), the sport's world governing body, "has made it a point to reveal if anyone was caught" taking drugs. "What Boris said doesn't make any sense." German player Michael Stich, the world's No. 2, had already hit back at Becker when he arrived Thursday. "It was a stupid comment to make," said Stich. "I don't know why he comes out with such things or from where he gets his ideas." Becker had claimed last month that some players used drugs such as cocaine and marijuana which was making a mockery of the random drug tests carried out by the ATP. Sampras, the reigning Wimbledon and U.S. Open champion, plays his first round match here Tuesday when he takes on Morocco's Karim Alami, who had to qualify for the main draw. Stich takes on big serving Frenchman Stephane Simini while number three seed Stefan Edberg of Sweden will open the tournament against South Africa's Gary Muller. "Also taking part in the tournament are Croatia's Goran Ivanisevic, the runner-up to Becker in the final here last year, and Frenchman Henri Leconte. Both men start their singles first round Tuesday.

Morceli named Athlete of the Year

PARIS (AFP) — Algerian middle distance runner Nouredine Morceli is named Athlete of the Year by French sports daily L'Equipe in its Monday edition. Morceli, who broke Steve Cram's world mile record in September after retaining his World Championship 1,500m crown in Stuttgart, topped the paper's poll ahead of Britain's world and Olympic 100m champion, Linford Christie. The Chicago Bulls third NBA cowinner retired basketball superstar Michael Jordan third place ahead of Tour De France champion Miguel Indurain. The highest-ranked woman was Hungarian swimmer Kristina Egerzegy in tenth place.

Auriol feels the heat in the desert

PARIS (AFP) — Hubert Auriol lost more than an hour to the other leaders of Paris-Dakar Rally when the engine of his Citroen burst into flames half-way through Sunday's special stage in the Western Sahara. Auriol was able to restart after getting the fire under control and repairing the fault but he eventually finished 118min behind the German Erwin Weber, the winner of the 693km stage from Tan-Tan to Dakha. Weber was followed home in the longest stage of the rally by his Mitsubishi team-mate Kenjiro Shinozuka. The Japanese driver shaved just over two minutes off Pierre Lartigue's overall lead, which is now down to 13min 25sec. Weber is third just over two minutes further back. Despite his lost time, Auriol is still in fifth place.

Tomba hints at retirement

ROME (R) — Italian Alpine skiing star Alberto Tomba has suggested that his glittering career is drawing towards a close. "There's not a long future for me in skiing. I don't imagine I'll still be on the World Cup circuit when I reach my 30s," Tomba, 27 weeks ago, told the Gazzetta Dello Sport in an interview. The flamboyant Italian, who next month bids to become the first athlete to win a total of four Alpine skiing Olympic golds, nurtured dreams of stardom in the movie world. "I'm beginning to think about my future beyond the world of sport. I've had offers from an agency in Hollywood," he said. Slalom specialist Tomba, three golds and a silver medal in the last two Olympics, said the courses at the games "tend to be easier than those on the World Cup circuit."

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANIAH HIRSCH
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ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—Both vulnerable, as South

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass

2 ♠ Pass ?

What do you bid now?

A.—It's simply a question of whether you should rebid your spades or suggest a no-trump game.

The modern theory of reverse bidding says that responder's primary duty is to support one of opener's suits if possible; if not, to rebid a five-card major. That would make two spades the clear choice.

Reggiana's hopes of saving the match were boosted by the sending-off of Papin but the efficient Milan maintained their grip on the match by closing down the midfield and starving the Reggiana defenders of the ball.

Against Udinese, Baggio began World Cup year at his brilliant best.

In the 11th minute, it was his perfectly weighted pass which gave team mate Giancarlo Marocci time and space to open the Juventus account, with a finely-angled shot.

Three minutes into the second half, goal-maker turned goal-scorer as Baggio's cheeky backheel from a cross by Angelo Di Livio found the net via a deflection.

The prolific playmaker took his total for the season to 11 in the 61st minute, slaloming through the Udinese defence and sliding the ball past goalkeeper Graziano Battistini.

Gulit's goal for Sampdoria against Lazio means the Dutchman has now scored 10 goals in his first season with the Genoa club — one more than in his best season at Milan.

The early goal forced Lazio

Q.2—East-West vulnerable, as South

You hold: ♠KQ7 5 2 A92 4 A83 ♦Q987

The bidding has proceeded:

South West North East

1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass

What do you bid now?

A.—Partner has shown a balanced minimum opening bid. With your balanced hand and 13 high-card points, there's no need to look further. Jump to three no trump.

Q.3—As South, vulnerable, you hold:

47. ♠AQ65 ♦K7652 ♦4732

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1 ♠ 2 ♠ ?

What action do you take?

A.—If you chose two no trump, where's your source of tricks? If partner doesn't have a diamond fit, you're in trouble. The question is whether you should double for penalties or pass, and we lean to the former. If you play negative doubles, the problem is what to do after you pass and partner responds with a double.

Q.4—As South, vulnerable, you hold:

♦AQ105 ♦Q96 ♦Q9105 ♦654

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1 ♠ 2 ♠ ?

What action do you take?

A.—If you chose two no trump, where's your source of tricks? If partner doesn't have a diamond fit, you're in trouble. The question is whether you should double for penalties or pass, and we lean to the former. If you play negative doubles, the problem is what to do after you pass and partner responds with a double.

Q.5—As South, vulnerable, you hold:

47. ♠AQ65 ♦K7652 ♦4732

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1 ♠ 2 ♠ ?

What action do you take?

A.—If you chose two no trump, where's your source of tricks? If partner doesn't have a diamond fit, you're in trouble. The question is whether you should double for penalties or pass, and we lean to the former. If you play negative doubles, the problem is what to do after you pass and partner responds with a double.

Q.6—As South, vulnerable, you hold:

♦AQ105 ♦Q96 ♦Q9105 ♦654

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1 ♠ 2 ♠ ?

What action do you take?

A.—If you chose two no trump, where's your source of tricks? If partner doesn't have a diamond fit, you're in trouble. The question is whether you should double for penalties or pass, and we lean to the former. If you play negative doubles, the problem is what to do after you pass and partner responds with a double.

Q.7—As South, vulnerable, you hold:

47. ♠AQ65 ♦K7652 ♦4732

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1 ♠ 2 ♠ ?

What action do you take?

A.—If you chose two no trump, where's your source of tricks? If partner doesn't have a diamond fit, you're in trouble. The question is whether you should double for penalties or pass, and we lean to the former. If you play negative doubles, the problem is what to do after you pass and partner responds with a double.

Q.8—As South, vulnerable, you hold:

♦AQ105 ♦Q96 ♦Q9105 ♦654

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1 ♠ 2 ♠ ?

What action do you take?

A.—If you chose two no trump, where's your source of tricks? If partner doesn't have a diamond fit, you're in trouble. The question is whether you should double for penalties or pass, and we lean to the former. If you play negative doubles, the problem is what to do after you pass and partner responds with a double.

Q.9—As South, vulnerable, you hold:

47. ♠AQ65 ♦K7652 ♦4732

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1 ♠ 2 ♠ ?

What action do you take?

A.—If you chose two no trump, where's your source of tricks? If partner doesn't have a diamond fit, you're in trouble. The question is whether you should double for penalties or pass, and we lean to the former. If you play negative doubles, the problem is what to do after you pass and partner responds with a double.

Q.10—As South, vulnerable, you hold:

47. ♠AQ65 ♦K7652 ♦4732

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1 ♠ 2 ♠ ?

What action do you take?

A.—If you chose two no trump, where's your source of tricks? If partner doesn't have a diamond fit, you're in trouble. The question is whether you should double for penalties or pass, and we lean to the former. If you play negative doubles, the problem is what to do after you pass and partner responds with a double.

Q.11—As South, vulnerable, you hold:

47. ♠AQ65 ♦K7652 ♦4732

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1 ♠ 2 ♠ ?

What action do you take?

A.—If you chose two no trump, where's your source of tricks? If partner doesn't have a diamond fit, you're in trouble. The question is whether you should double for penalties or pass, and we lean to the former. If you play negative doubles, the problem is what to do after you pass and partner responds with a double.

Q.12—As South, vulnerable, you hold:

47. ♠AQ65 ♦K7652 ♦4732

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1 ♠ 2 ♠ ?

What action do you take?

A.—If you chose two no trump, where's your source of tricks? If partner doesn't have a diamond fit, you're in trouble. The question is whether you should double for penalties or pass, and we lean to the former. If you play negative doubles, the problem is what to do after you pass and partner responds with a double.

Q.13—As South, vulnerable, you hold:

47. ♠AQ65 ♦K7652 ♦4732

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1 ♠ 2 ♠ ?

What action do you take?

A.—If you chose two no trump, where's your source of tricks? If partner doesn't have a diamond fit, you're in trouble. The question is whether you should double for penalties or pass, and we lean to the former. If you play negative doubles, the problem is what to do after you pass and partner responds with a double.

Q.14—As South, vulnerable, you hold:

47. ♠AQ65 ♦K7652 ♦4732

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1 ♠ 2 ♠ ?

What action do you take?

A.—If you chose two no trump, where's your source of tricks? If partner doesn't have a diamond fit, you're in trouble. The question is whether you should double for penalties or pass, and we lean to the former. If you play negative doubles, the problem is what to do after you pass and partner responds with a double.

Q.15—As South, vulnerable, you hold:

47. ♠AQ65 ♦K7652 ♦4732

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1 ♠ 2 ♠ ?

What action do you take?

A.—If you chose two no trump, where's your source of tricks? If partner doesn't have a diamond fit, you're in trouble. The question is whether you should double for penalties or pass, and we lean to the former. If you play negative doubles, the problem is what to do after you pass and partner responds with a double.

Q.16—As South, vulnerable, you hold:

47. ♠AQ65 ♦K7652 ♦4732

The bidding has proceeded:

North East South West

1 ♠ 2 ♠ ?

What action do you take?

A.—If you chose two no trump, where's your source of tricks? If partner doesn't have a diamond fit, you're in trouble. The question is whether you should double for penalties or pass, and we lean to the former. If you play negative doubles, the problem is what to do after you pass and partner responds with a double.

Q.17—As South, vulnerable, you hold:

47. ♠AQ65 ♦K7652 ♦4732

The bidding has proceeded:

Dozens killed, hundreds injured as Afghan foes battle

KABUL (Agencies) — Bloody factional battles raged in two Afghan cities on Monday, leaving dozens dead and scores injured in what an ex-army chief general said was a coup attempt. President Mohammad Rabbari.

Rocket, shell and mortar bombs began raining down on the capital Kabul at dawn after an overnight lull in the fighting between forces led by northern warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostum and Mr. Rabbari's troops, battling for supremacy in Afghanistan.

Plumes of smoke spiralled over the Afghan capital from rocket and artillery fire that battered residential areas of the city centre. Wounded dozens and injured more than 800 in the worst fighting in Kabul for at least a year.

Afghan spokesman said a death toll of 70 was a conservative estimate and the final toll was likely to be much higher because the intensity of the firing was making it hard for families to take the wounded to hospitals.

Witnesses said they saw dozens of dead and injured trapped by the fighting in the Soviet-built Microrayon housing complex in the north of the city where many families of Gen. Dostum's live.

An official of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) reported three days of intense fighting in Dostum's stronghold in the northern city of Mazar-e-Sharif between his commandos and local Taliban forces.

One hospital alone run by the ICRC in Mazar-e-Sharif

had admitted 70 injured, ICRC official Andreas Pfiffner said.

"We carried out the attack because we wanted to change the political system in Afghanistan." Gen. Fauzi, a senior commander of Gen. Dostum's troops in Kabul, said by telephone.

Neither side has made any attempt to begin peace talks.

Afghan embassy and government opponents said the clashes had spread to bases held by rivals in Faryab and Kunduz in the north although Kabul remained the key battle ground.

Mr. Rabbari, threatened by a three-pronged onslaught by Gen. Dostum and his new-found allies, was bringing fresh troops from Kabul, sources said. Kabul remained the key battle ground.

The fighting in Kabul resumed with "fresh ferocity" early Monday after a quiet night. Sources in the rival camp said Mr. Rabbari himself had moved out of Kabul as rockets fired by Dostum's forces slammed the presidential palace on the third consecutive day.

They said he was in nearby Paghman, headquarters of the Ittihad-e-Islami of fundamentalist leader Rasul Sayyaf who was siding with Mr. Rabbari.

Sources said a top Jamiat commander based in western Herat, Ismail Khan, Monday rushed arms and men to reinforce the defence of the capital.

"Planes loaded with fresh troops equipped with light weapons landed at Kabul's military air base early morning."

"The sources in radio contact with Kabul told AFP.

Mr. Rabbari's former defence minister and the northern region's commander Ahmad Shah Massoud was also rushing his Shoora-e-Naziat troops from the Jabol us Siraj

Israelis arrest Fateh activists

GAZA CITY, occupied Gaza Strip (Agencies) — Israeli troops have arrested two members of Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat's Fateh faction who are suspected of killing two Israelis last week, Palestinian sources said Monday.

In a raid Sunday in the Gaza Strip's Khan Younis refugee camp, they arrested Furid Al Kaisi, 21, and Al Abu Sita, 20, on charges of killing alleged drug dealers Chaim Weizman, 34, and David Bubil, 41, near Tel Aviv last Friday.

The two were reportedly seen writing on the main Khan Yunes mosque that "the Ahmad Abu Rich group carried out the murder of the two Zionists dogs at Ramla to avenge the army's killing of Ahmad Abu Rich."

Meanwhile, rockets slammed into government buildings, military sites and homes as snow fell gently on deserted city streets.

Some of the heaviest fighting centred around the airport, leaving the sky black with smoke. Fires raged throughout the city and at least 40 different buildings were in flames.

Mr. Rabbari's Jamiat-e-Islami party still holds most strategic sites in Kabul despite the massive assault.

However, control of the airport appeared up for grabs.

Gen. Dostum's forces held the terminal building but were under constant fire from Mr. Rabbari's forces in the surrounding hills, according to witnesses and military sources.



'UPRISING!' Two unidentified civilians lie dead Sunday after a firefight on the road to Rancho Nuevo with Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) rebels in Mexico. The rebels occupied the townships here and in four other cities late

Saturday demanding an end to what they call government oppression of indigenous people (see page 8). According to official reports, at least six people have died in the uprising. Unconfirmed reports put the death toll higher (AFP photo)

Hurd says no danger of peace process breakdown

LONDON (Agencies) — Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said Monday there was no danger of the Middle East peace plan collapsing.

Israel withheld approval Sunday for a new round of peace talks with the Palestinians, and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin reportedly told his cabinet he was willing to let Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat "sweat a bit."

"I think both Prime Minister Rabin and Mr. Arafat have gone past the point where either of them would wish to go back to the previous confusion and disagreement," Mr. Hurd told reporters as he left London for a tour of the Middle East.

"But of course there is a lot of hard practical negotiating and work on the ground to be done," said Mr. Hurd before leaving for Lebanon, Israel and Jordan.

The army also arrested Mohammad Abu Rich, a former member of the Islamic Jihad Movement who had been pardoned at the same time as his brother Ahmad.

Soldiers also raided the Bureij camp and arrested Yasir Taha, 20, a member of the Izzedine Al Qassam, the armed wing of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas).

A wave of violence since the historic Sept. 13 accord has left 47 Palestinians and 21 Israelis dead. Thirty Palestinians have been killed by other Palestinians, most on suspicion they were collaborators.

The killings threatened to further undercut Israeli confidence in peacemaking with the PLO, both because a Fateh member claimed responsibility and because the attack occurred inside Israel.

Hisham Abdul Kazak, a prominent Fateh leader in Gaza, said he heard about Friday's attack from the press and stressed that his group had not sanctioned the killing.

4 killed in Algeria

ALGIERS (Agencies) — Two civilians had their throats cut and their heads cut off by an armed Algerian gang, while two car park attendants were shot dead at the weekend, press reports said here Monday.

A teacher and a former fighter in the war of independence had their throats slit and were horribly decapitated" at Touila village near Al Tarif in eastern Algeria overnight Saturday, the Algerian Republic daily reported.

Gunmen with automatic weapons earlier on Saturday killed the car park attendants in Algiers, the Liberte daily reported.

The U.S.-based management consultants KMPG secured a deal to help overlook, prepare documents and assist in the planning of Lebanon's state-run Council for Development and Reconstruction.

The British firm Trafalgar House applied for a tender to take part in the expansion of Beirut international airport, where a \$400 million reconstruction programme is expected to be launched this year.

The president of the Lebanese industrialists' association, Jacques Sarrat, is expected to lead a delegation of business to London later this month to discuss ways of bolstering ties between the two countries.

Also in 1994, Britain hopes to reopen in Beirut the British Council, which was closed in 1986.

Around 300 Britons live in Lebanon, not including 5,000 people who hold dual British and Lebanese nationalities.

FLN to boycott dialogue

Algeria's former vanguard National Liberation Front (FLN) party will boycott a national conference called by the government, an official newspaper said Sunday.

"At its meeting on Thursday, the (FLN) political bureau decided to boycott the national conference," the evening daily Al Massa said quoting sources close to the bureau.

No NFL official was immediately available for comment.

The Algerian authorities facing prolonged violence blamed on the FLN have called the conference for Jan. 25 and 26 to bring together the government and the opposition.

Its main objective is to pick a successor to the Higher Council of State, the collective presidency whose mandate is due to expire on Jan. 31.

NFL president Abdurrahman Mahri said in an interview last month his party, Algeria's former sole ruling body, would boycott the forum if its work was merely to select new rulers.

"We consider the national conference as the ultimate forum for dialogue. What is needed from the outset is an accord. If there is no accord we will go to the conference. If not, we'll stay away," Mr. Mahri said.

France-Info radio said last week a statement from the FLN turned down proposals for a national dialogue, calling instead for continued armed struggle.

It said a three-page statement warned those who might be tempted to talk not to negotiate with "the arbitrary junta supported by arrogant foreign states and the army."

Concern over rights

Europe and the United States should speak out about human rights abuse by the Algerian government and link future credit to an improved human rights record, Middle East Watch said.

In a report on Algeria the human rights watchdog said the government and the opposition "are each responsible for a severe deterioration in human rights conditions" there.

Emergency tax collections exceed JD 120 m target

AMMAN (Agencies) — The Income Tax Department (ITD) exceeded its target of JD 120 million in 1993, up from JD 110 million in 1992, said a spokesman of the department's directorate of tax planning and parameter director Muamer Haddadin.

Addressing a press conference at his office in Amman, Mr. Haddadin said that the amounts collected in the past year were more than the JD 125 million sum envisaged in the budget for 1994. He did not say that the income target had been exceeded over that year.

He highlighted that the department was continuing its decentralisation through opening new offices to facilitate tax payments by the public and by allowing payments in installments and by conducting surveys in order to cover taxpayers.

Referring to the department's functions in the past year, Mr. Haddadin said that this was feasible noting that the department

could meet the target due to its upgraded collection system and counting on continued favourable response on the part of the payers and their cooperation with various ITD branches around the country.

He pointed out that the department had widened its coverage by enlisting new individuals and companies as taxpayers.

Mr. Haddadin mentioned that the department's new offices which were opened last year were in the central north and western districts of Amman.

The new offices, he added, do save time and effort for the taxpayers by allowing them to pay their dues at their regions.

NEWS IN BRIEF

country to end what it sees as the rival Issa tribe's domination in government.

Iraqi soldiers shoot coast guard — Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY (R) — Iraqi soldiers in a boat shot and wounded a Kuwaiti coast guard after violating the emirate's territorial waters in the northern Gulf, the Interior Ministry said Monday. A spokesman said the coast guard was hit by two bullets in an exchange of fire Sunday between a Kuwaiti patrol and the Iraqi boat near Buiyan Island on the Kuwaiti side of the waterway which divides the two countries. An officer and two soldiers were on board the Iraqi boat, said the independent newspaper Al Anbaa. They attacked the Kuwaiti patrol after it fired warning shots. There was no immediate comment from Baghdad on the incident.

French Jews call for ban on Zhirinovsky

PARIS (AFP) — Leaders of France's Jewish community called Monday on the government to refuse entry to Russian ultra-nationalist leader Vladimir Zhirinovsky. In a statement the Representative Council of Jewish Institutions in France (CRIF) called on "the highest authorities" to ban Mr. Zhirinovsky on account of his "racist, anti-Semitic (and) xenophobic theories." Stressing Bonn had already refused to grant the ultra-nationalist leader an entry visa, the CRIF said it would be "totally inconsistent" for France to struggle against racism and anti-Semitism while "offering such a man the chance to express... theories of exclusion and hatred in our country." Mr. Zhirinovsky, who several media reports have described as having a Jewish father, said Dec. 30 that he hoped to visit France in February and hold talks with political leaders. French European Affairs Minister Alain Lamassoure said Sunday that France might refuse entry to Mr. Zhirinovsky because of his "intolerable" policies.

Ankara slams Brussels over clashes

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkey on Monday blamed Belgian authorities for clashes between Turks and Kurds in Brussels over the weekend which injured five policemen. A statement by the Foreign Ministry also demanded an explanation for comments by Belgian Interior Minister Louis Tolokon blaming the Turks for the clashes. The Belgian chargé d'affaires was summoned to the Foreign Ministry Monday morning to explain the comments, diplomatic sources said. "The Belgian authorities are without doubt responsible for authorising the PKK (Kurdish Labour Party) supporters to demonstrate in an area where many Turks live," the statement said. "The Belgian authorities, not following the example of Germany or France by banning the PKK, paved the way for such incidents to occur on Belgian territory," it said. Five policemen and a number of others were hurt Saturday evening when a group of up to 200 Kurds from Germany clashed with local Turks in the Saint Josse district of the Belgian capital. They have arrested 143 and declared the last fugitives from

Bombay blast trial delayed by lack of space in court

BOMBAY (AP) — The trial of more than 140 suspects charged in connection with deadly bomb bombings here in March was put off Monday because the court turned out to be too small to hold so many people.

Judge J. M. Patel delayed the start of the hearing until Feb. 2 after spending the day discussing seating arrangements with attorneys gathered at a police barracks in the Arthur Road jail converted into a special court.

Some 40 lawyers and their assistants representing the accused, a heavy police deployment and the presence of court staff contributed to the over-crowding.

Court officials said "procedural problems" were also to blame for the postponement, citing demands by many of the accused for English translations of prosecution documents available only in the local Marathi language.

Proceedings on Monday were uneventful but for a fight caused by an arrested customs officer, who told the court that some "very senior police officers" were involved in the smuggling of explosives used in the bombings.

"No landing of arms and explosives on the coast can take place without the connivance of both the police and the customs," the officer, Somnath Thapa, said.

"But they (police) have not been arrested," Mr. Thapa charged. "They have made me a scapegoat."

Bombay police charged 188 suspects in connection with the March 12 blasts which killed more than 200 people in the western Indian metropolis. They have arrested 143 and declared the last fugitives from

justice.

Nine of the accused have no lawyers, and one said he could not pay for his defence.

The suspects, 20 of whom are out on bail but were present in court Monday, face a blanket charge of conspiring to wage war against the government.

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COLUMN 10

U.K. crown jewels to be moved to new museum

LONDON (AP) — Queen Elizabeth II has given permission for the crown jewels to be moved from their high-security display in the Tower of London to a new museum that will allow the public greater access to the collection.

"In a symbolic, yet hugely important step, in her mission to make the monarchy more open she will give the public unprecedented access to the priceless collection," the Mail on Sunday said of the queen's decision to house the jewels in a new museum.

The queen's decision to move the jewels to a new museum is the latest in a series of changes to the royal residence.

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